THE HISTORY OF ROME:

FROM

THE EARLIEST PERIOD TO THE CLOSE OF THE EMPIRE.

Adapted for Schools and the Youth of both Sexes.

New and Revised Edition: Enlarged and Improved, with Chronological Annals and Map.

EDITED BY

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ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE

TO NEW EDITION.

AMONG School historians the name of "CORNER" stands out as a "household" word.

And that this popularity is well deserved, may be proved by the fact that the books under this name are such that a child can understand and an adult think over.

Indeed, the whole pages may be described rather as a succession of masterly-written ear-paintings than ordinary dry chronicles of events.

Not the least, too, of the historian's functions are always carried out in these volumes; namely, the constant excitation of interest and sympathy in the young reader, and the suggestion of thought.

Perhaps the two most important features of this work, as with all others from the same pen, are that it is readable and reliable.

The unconscious ease and attractiveness of the writer are bound to render the volume entertaining, and, seeing that the present history is one more of the people than a mere enumeration of the crimes of princes; useful it is certain to be, particularly as imperial Rome must ever be regarded as the centre, and meeting point of all history.

J. J.

PREFACE.

THIS volume is intended as a useful book of instruction; its purpose being to present to the mind of the young student a true picture of the ancient Romans, according to the new light that has been thrown on their history, through the indefatigable researches of some of the most eminent writers of the present age.

A knowledge of Roman history forms a proper foundation for the study of that of modern nations; and it is certainly of the utmost importance that all elementary works on the subject should be as free from error as possible.

No history abounds more in fabulous tales than that of Rome during its rise from obscurity; and as those fables have been handed down as historical facts from time immemorial, and received as truth, until a comparatively late period, there are many books still put into the hands of children calculated to give very false impressions with regard to the state of Rome in its early days.

The works of the late learned Professor Niebuhr, and the excellent and highly-talented Dr. Arnold, clearly prove, that much of what is called the early history of Rome, is unreal.

These authors are the chief authorities for the following brief account of the Roman people, from the time when they were first known as a nation, to the total extinction of their political existence, at the overthrow of the empire of the East.

The popular legends that adorn the early annals of the Roman state, although mostly shown to have no foundation in truth, are not omitted, because everyone ought to be acquainted with them; but great care has been taken, in relating such stories, to point out their doubtful nature, that the learner may not be in danger of mistaking for real history anything that is fabulous.

The manners and customs, arts and sciences, laws and institutions of the Romans, at different periods, taken from the most authentic sources, are carefully depicted; and when we consider that all these were introduced into our own country by that great people, and that traces of them are still existing in every part of England, our interest cannot fail to be excited, nor can we be too assiduous in endeavouring to obtain an accurate knowledge of the ancient Romans through every stage of their remarkable history.

JULIA CORNER.

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HISTORY OF ROME.

FOUNDATION OF ROME.

Almost all Europe, and vast portions of Asia and Africa, under the Romans in the early part of the Christian Era.

IN the early part of the Christian era, almost all the nations of Europe, with a vast portion of Asia and Africa, were under the dominion of the Romans. [1]Britain, France, Spain, part of Germany and the Netherlands, Turkey, the whole of Italy, with Egypt and many African states, Syria, and other eastern countries, were included among the provinces of the Roman empire, of which Rome was the mighty capital, a city then unrivalled in power, wealth, and magnificence. But how had Rome become so great? Rome—once only a small town, composed of straw-built huts, the abode of a few shepherds, who fed their flocks at the foot of the Palatine hill. How this came to pass, we shall presently discover; but, before we enter upon the history of Rome in particular, let us see what was the general condition of Italy in the primitive days of the Romans, who seem to have been first known[2] about seven hundred and fifty years before the birth of our Saviour.

General condition of Italy in the primitive days of the Romans.

[3]Italy was not, like other parts of Europe, Greece excepted, in a state of barbarism, but was peopled by many different tribes or nations, all more or less civilised, and contained several considerable kingdoms and states, the greatest of which appear to have been those of [4]Etruria, Alba, and Latium, or the country of the Latins. The Etruscans, or people of Etruria, who were also called

The Tuscans.

Tuscans, occupied that part of the country which lies [5]between the Arno and the Tiber, and is now known as the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. [6]They were a wealthy and powerful people; superior, in point of civilisation, to the other Italian nations, and acquainted with many useful and elegant arts, which they had probably derived from the Greeks, who were at that time the most enlightened people in the world. It is certain that a friendly intercourse subsisted between the Greeks and Etruscans, and there is reason to believe that they had commercial dealings with each other, as it is stated that Homer, the great poet, who probably flourished about nine hundred years before the Christian era, visited the shores of Etruria in a Grecian trading vessel.[a]

[7]The people of Etruria consisted of two classes only; the nobles and their serfs: but this was not the case in the Latin states, where the great mass of the population was free.

In those remote ages, [8]the principal states of Italy were composed of a number of independent republics, each having its own separate government, but forming altogether a confederation for mutual support and protection. Each of these republics consisted of a chief city, with a certain extent of territory, and several small towns and villages dependent on it. In some of these cities, there were elective kings; while others were ruled by a senate, composed of nobles.[b]

Twelve Etrurian cities, thirty Latium.

[9]The cities of Etruria were twelve in number; those of Alba, thirty; and those of Latium, thirty; so that the Campagna, a vast plain, leading to Rome, now barren, unhealthy, and thinly peopled, was then covered with populous towns, and well cultivated farms.[c]

[10]The religion of all the ancient Italian nations was

a Macpherson, in his 'Annals of Commerce,' gives this passage from Herodotus' 'Life of Homer.'

b Keightley.

c Dr. Arnold.

paganism; that is, they worshipped a great number of gods and goddesses, to whom they dedicated temples, which were usually built on some elevated spots; and their chief religious rites consisted in offerings or sacrifices of animals and of the fruits of the earth.

The city of Rome founded, B.C. 753.

[11]The original city of Rome was built on the Palatine mount, one of the seven hills over which it was afterwards extended, and it was probably, one of the subject towns of Alba.[a] Its inhabitants, although they followed the peaceful occupations of shepherds and herdsmen, were of a warlike character, and frequently engaged in hostilities with their neighbours, especially[12] the Sabines, who were also called Quirites, and whose chief city, Quirium, stood on the Quirinal hill, a spot which was partly occupied by a summer palace and extensive gardens.

The origin of the Romans

[13]The origin of the Romans, and the time of their first settlement on the Palatine hill, are alike uncertain; but it is supposed they were a band of adventurers from various parts, who were practised in arms, and not very scrupulous as to the manner in which they employed them.[b]

Romulus, the reputed founder of Rome.

The story of [14]Romulus, the reputed founder of Rome, is therefore treated by modern historians as a mere fable, which took its rise [15]from the political legends and traditions of the Romans themselves, who, when their city had become of some importance in the estimation of the surrounding nations, might naturally seek to gratify their own pride, by tracing its origin to an illustrious source.

It was customary among the Greeks to name places from imaginary heroes; and, like all heathen nations, they were fond of exalting those heroes above mortal men, by placing them among the gods of their mythology. The Romans, who had some knowledge of Greek literature, at an early period of their history, probably drew thence the inference, that their city, being called Rome, must have been founded

a Niebuhr. b Dr. Arnold.

The legend of Romulus and Remus.

by one named Remus or Romulus.[a] He was supposed to have been a prince, and was celebrated by the early poets as the son of Mars, the god of war.

The legend, in the course of time, became a popular belief; but how many generations had passed away, and what alterations had been made in the original tale before it was received by the Romans as true history, are points on which we must be satisfied to remain in ignorance.[b]

The fable is this:—

The birth of Romulus and Remus.

"Romulus and Remus were said to be twin brothers of royal race, their mother being the daughter of Numitor, king of Alba, and their father, the god Mars, who, it is said, had secretly espoused the princess, although she was one of the vestal virgins, or priestesses, who were forbidden to marry. Now it happened that just after the birth of these children, Numitor was deposed by his brother, Amulius, and obliged to retire to his private estates. The usurper, being a cruel tyrant, gave orders that the infant princes should be thrown into the Tiber, and the barbarous mandate was obeyed; but the story goes on to say that these children were saved by a miracle, being cast on shore near the foot of the Palatine hill, where they were found by a wolf, who took them to her den, and gave them nourishment, as though they had been her own offspring."

The children found by a shepherd.

The story goes on to state that, under the care of this strange nurse, they were found by a shepherd, named Faustulus, who dwelt in a cottage on the hill. He was much surprised, as well he might be, and took the children home to his wife, who brought them up as her own. When the lads had grown to manhood, they accidentally discovered the secret of their royal origin, on which they forsook the shepherd's life, and, according to this romantic tale, were the means of restoring their grandfather to his

a Keightley. b N. Buhr.

throne. Soon after this, we are told, they agreed to build a city for themselves on the Palatine hill, the scene of their wonderful preservation and boyish sports. Accordingly, they marked out the site, and fortified it by raising a wall and digging a ditch; but, ere the work was completed, a quarrel arose between them as to which should be king, and Romulus, or one of his partisans, killed his brother Remus; and thus he became sole master of the new city.

Romulus king of Rome.

The story then tells how Romulus, having assembled around him a band of warriors who acknowledged him as their king, in order to increase the population of the city, invited strangers and fugitives from other places to come and settle there; and made wise laws for the government of his kingdom, which he extended by conquests over some of the neighbouring states; and that, after a long and glorious reign, as he was one day reviewing his troops, a storm came on, which overspread the city with darkness; and that when the dark cloud had passed away, it was found that the king had disappeared. [16] The conclusion of this wonderful legend is, that Mars had descended from heaven in a flaming chariot, and borne away his warlike son, who was afterwards worshipped by the Romans as the god Quirinus, a name which had some mystical allusion to the union of the Romans and Sabines, or Quirites.

B.C. 716. The end of the reign of Romulus.

[17] The earliest form of government known at Rome was, undoubtedly, that of an elective monarchy; and although Romulus, and some of the kings, whom we read of as his successors, were not real characters, still it is certain that the Romans were governed by kings for about two centuries and a half, during which period, the greater part of their most ancient laws and institutions was founded, and they became at length a great and powerful people. It is stated in the legend of Romulus, that he not only invited strangers to settle in his city, and made it an asylum for criminals from other places; but that he obtained wives

Earliest form of government.

The first Romans.

for his people by stratagem. It may easily be supposed, that, if the first Romans were but a band of adventurers themselves, and gave sanctuary to men of bad character from the neighbouring states, they would naturally be shunned by the people of the cities around them, and might experience some difficulty in obtaining wives. [18] In course of time, however, as they grew more powerful, the Sabines, who were their more immediate neighbours, probably found that it would be their best policy to enter into a friendly alliance with so formidable a people, and the two states were united accordingly; and after a while became one, and were governed by one king only. [19] How this union was brought about is uncertain; but tradition has, as usual, supplied the place of historical truth with a poetic fiction, of which this is the substance:—

[20] THE FABULOUS TALE OF THE SABINE MAIDENS.

Customs of surrounding nations.

"The Romans were not held in much esteem by the people of the surrounding states, who would not give their daughters in marriage to them. Now it was the custom of all these nations to celebrate festivals in honour of their gods, with sports and games, such as racing, wrestling, and other manly exercises. Festivals of this kind in Italy, as well as in Greece and in the East, were like fairs, or holiday gatherings or feasts, still kept in some places, but were mingled with religious rites, and multitudes of people came to them.[a] The story therefore tells us, that Romulus made a proclamation that, on a certain day, a great festival would be held at Rome, to which all his Latin and Sabine neighbours were invited.

Proclamation of Romulus.

"According to his expectations, the principal men of the nearest cities, not suspecting treachery, brought their wives and daughters to see the show; but while their attention was fixed on the games, a band of young men rushed

a Niebuhr.

War between the Romans and Sabines.

suddenly amongst them, with drawn swords, and seized many of the young maidens, whom they carried into the city, the gates of which were instantly closed. This outrage, the story informs us, led to a war, which might have proved fatal to the Roman states, but for the interference of the ladies, in whose cause it was undertaken. Of course we are to suppose they had become attached to their Roman husbands, and were anxious to see them reconciled to their Sabine relatives; for the legend says that they rushed into the midst of the battle; and, by their tears and entreaties, persuaded the combatants to lay down their arms, and make peace. The two nations were then united into one state, but each continued to be governed by its own king, and they held their general assemblies in the valley between the Palatine and Capitoline hills, the place of meeting being called the Comitium."

The two nations united.

Such is the popular tradition respecting the union of the Romans and Sabines; and although the tale itself may be a fiction, [21]there is no doubt that such a union took place soon after the establishment of the Roman monarchy: and that, in the course of time, when the alliance had been strengthened by inter-marriages, and a common religious worship, [22]the people came to the agreement to have but one king, who was to be chosen alternately from each nation.[a]

Building of the temple of Janus.

Soon after the treaty of alliance between the two cities, the [23]temple of Janus was built on the road leading from Rome to Quirium, with a door facing each. This temple was kept shut in the time of peace, perhaps, to prevent the quarrels that might arise from too free an intercourse; but it was open in the time of war, that either town might send assistance to the other without delay. The first rulers of a state are naturally its first lawgivers; for

a Niebuhr.

people cannot dwell together in a community without laws for their mutual security; and thus [24] the Romans attributed their earliest laws and institutions to the same fabulous hero who was supposed to have been the founder of their city. No one, however, can tell with certainty who first gave laws to Rome; but it is far more important to know what the laws were, than to know who made them; therefore, we must be satisfied in being able to obtain some information on that subject.

First rulers and lawgivers.

[25] After the union of Rome and Quirium, the people were divided into three tribes, the first being formed by the Romans, the second by the Sabines, and the third by the Luceres, a people dwelling on the Cœlian hill, who had become subjects to the Romans.[a]

Division of the people.

[26] Each tribe was divided into ten smaller bodies of citizens, called Curiæ, so that thirty curiæ constituted the whole state.

A curia consisted of ten Gentes, or houses,[27] and a house, which might be termed a clan, was formed by the union of several families, that all bore the same name, and [28] were bound together by the performance of religious rites at stated times and places; as, for instance, the members of one house were accustomed to repair in solemn procession, to offer sacrifices to Minerva at certain seasons of the year; those of another, to Hercules; and thus each house had its particular object of worship, which rendered the rite of clanship sacred, and every member contributed his share towards the expense of the sacrifices. The members of a house were bound to aid each other in paying fines to the state, and in all other political affairs; and if any one among them died without heirs, his property was divided among the members of his house. The families that formed the houses, curiæ, and tribes, were the original citizens, or nobility, of Rome; but they were not the whole

Duties of the members of a house.

Original citizens of Rome.

a Niebuhr.

people, for [29] each family had its dependents, called Clients, whose condition somewhat resembled that of the feudal vassals during the middle ages. The clients were bondmen; but how they became so, is not exactly known. [30] It is supposed, however, that when the principal families were formed into tribes, the common people were placed under their protection, and thus every citizen became the lord, or patron, of a number of attached followers, wholly devoted to the interests of his house. Some of the clients worked at trades, or kept shops; but those who had no particular occupation, usually received from their patron small grants of land for tillage, with leave to build cottages, which they occupied as tenants at will. [31] A patron was bound to treat his clients with paternal care; and hence the citizens who belonged to the noble houses were termed Patres, or Patricians. The patron was obliged to relieve their distresses, to protect them from injustice, and to conduct their lawsuits: and this is why a lawyer calls those persons who employ him, his clients.[a]

Clients and patrons.

The duties of the clients towards a patron were numerous: they were to obey his commands, to promote his honour, to aid in paying his fines, and defraying the expenses of public offices; to contribute towards the marriage portions of his daughters; and to ransom him, or any of his family, who might chance to be made captives in war.[b]

[32] At the early period of which I am speaking, the whole of the Roman people consisted of the patrons, or patricians, and their clients; but in course of time there arose another class, distinct from either; namely, [33] the Free Commons, or Plebeians, the great mass of whom were conquered Latins, who were admitted as subjects, but not citizens, of Rome; so that they were excluded from any share in the government, which was kept entirely in the hands of the patricians. [34] The plebeians could hold property, and were

The Roman people.

Rights of plebeians

a Keightley. b Niebuhr.

protected by the laws; but they were forbidden to marry into the patrician families: and thus the line of distinction, between citizens and subjects, was carefully preserved.[a]

The Senate.

[35]The Senate, or parliament, as we should call it, consisted of two hundred members, being one for each house of the Roman and Sabine tribes; but at a later period, the Luceres were permitted to have representatives, and then there were three hundred senators. [36]These, however, had no power to pass laws without the sanction of the general assembly of the citizens, who held their meetings in the Comitium, to decide by vote on all questions proposed in the senate. [37]The power of the king was limited. [38]He was commander-in-chief of the army, and officiated as High Priest at the state sacrifices; but he could make no laws without the consent of the citizens; [39]and if he imposed any fines or penalties on a patrician that were considered unjust, the injured party might appeal to the General Assembly; and then it was put to the vote, whether the king or the complainant were in the right, and judgment was given accordingly.

Rights of the kings.

When there came to be a free class of the common people, the power of the king was absolute over that order of his subjects, which comprised, as I said before, the population of the conquered neighbouring cities, together with freed clients, and strangers who came to settle at Rome, and who, not belonging to the tribes, were classed among the plebeians.

[40]The king had the disposal of the spoils and lands acquired by war. A part of any conquered territory became crown land, and was cultivated by the crown vassals; so that the sovereign possessed extensive domains, and a numerous train of dependents.[b]

a Dr. Arnold. *b* Niebuhr.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 What was the extent of the Roman empire in the early part of the Christian era?

2 At what period were the Romans first known as a nation?

3 What was the general condition of Italy in the early ages?

4 Which were the principal states?

5 Where was Etruria situated?

6 Describe the Etruscans.

7 How did their social system differ from that of the Latins?

8 How were the Italian states in general constituted?

9 What was the number of cities in the chief states?

10 What was the religion of the ancient Italians?

11 What was the original site of Rome?

12 Who were the Sabines?

13 What is the supposed origin of the Romans?

14 Who was the reputed founder of Rome?

15 How is the story of Romulus supposed to have originated?

16 Who was the god Quirinus?

17 What was the earliest form of government among the Romans?

18 What people united themselves with the Romans?

19 How was this union effected?

20 What popular tale took its rise from the alliance?

21 When did this union take place?

22 How were the two states to be governed?

23 What was the temple of Janus?

24 To whom are the first laws of the Romans attributed?

25 Name the origin and number of the tribes.

26 What were the curiæ?

27 What were the gentes?

28 How was the tie of clanship rendered sacred?

29 What were the clients?

30 Describe their origin and condition.

31 What were the mutual duties of patrons and clients?

32 Into how many classes was the population at first divided?

33 What new order afterwards arose?

34 What was their condition?

35 How was the senate constituted?

36 How was the senatorial power limited?

37 Was the king absolute?

38 What were his functions?
39 What great privilege was possessed by the patricians?
40 How did the king acquire riches and territory?

THE KINGS OF ROME.

The Seven Kings of Rome.

We are told, in the old Roman histories, that there were seven kings of Rome, whose successive reigns occupied a period of two hundred and forty-four years;[2] when a great revolution took place, and the last king being deposed and banished, a republican form of government was instituted in place of the monarchy. It is, however, contrary to all probability that there should have been only seven kings during that long period, in times of rapine and violence, in a kingdom where the throne was elective; where each monarch is represented as being of mature age when he commenced his reign; and of whom four are said to have met with violent deaths.

Roman Historians.

Now there were no regular historians at Rome in those days; but [3]it was the custom for the chief pontiff, or priest, to keep a register of the events of each year, on a white table; and these notes were afterwards collected into books, and were the only records of public transactions. [4]Many of the tables, and, perhaps, the books also, were destroyed when the city was taken by the Gauls, long after the fall of the monarchy, and [5]new annals were composed by the priests from such materials as they could collect;[a] which consisted of the few tables that had been preserved, and certain national poems respecting the kings and most renowned heroes, the greater portion of which was, no doubt, fabulous. These, it appears, were arranged by the pontiffs, and mixed up with other popular traditions, so as to form a semblance of the history; and thus the whole

National Poems.

a Niebuhr.

account of the Roman monarchy is full of errors and inconsistencies. The number of kings is stated to have been seven, probably because the annalists could discover no traces of any more; therefore they were obliged to assign to each a very long reign, that the seven might fill up the space of two hundred and forty-four years.

Laws and Institutions.

During that period, great public works were performed and many laws and institutions established, which prove there must have been a wise and powerful government; and this is also evident from the fact that, [6] under the later kings, the dominion of Rome extended over the whole of Latium, and a great part of Etruria.[a]

From these remarks, it will be understood that the stories of the Roman kings are partly true, and partly fabulous; and that, although foreign conquests were achieved during the monarchy, and the city improved by public works of vast magnitude, it is by no means certain these things were done by the princes to whom they are attributed. I shall now proceed to the history as it is related by the ancient writers, at the same time pointing out those parts which are considered by the most learned historians of modern times, to be erroneous.

B.C. 715. Numa Pompilius king.

[7] We are told that when Romulus was taken from the earth in so miraculous a manner, the people chose for their king, a Sabine, named Numa Pompilius, who was famed for his wisdom, justice, and piety. [8] Now it is believed that the character of Numa is not more historical than that of Romulus, and that both belong to mythology rather than history. As Mars is the personification of war, so Numa may be regarded as the symbol of the early religious rites and ceremonies of the Romans, which were chiefly derived from the Sabines; a reason, perhaps, why their supposed founder is represented as being of that nation.[b]

a Dr. Arnold. b Keightley's Roman History.

B.C. 709. Priests and religous rites appointed.

[9]The kings of Rome were also the high priests, according to the custom of most heathen countries. Numa is said to have been the first who assumed that dignity; and to him is ascribed the institution of all the priestly offices of the Romans. [10]The chief were those of the

Pontiffs, Flamens, &c.

Pontiffs, the Flamens, the Augurs, the Salians, and the Vestal Virgins. [11]The duty of the four Pontiffs was to regulate and preside over all religious ceremonies. The three Flamens were priests devoted to the service of the three principal gods, Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus. They were distinguished by a particular kind of cap, called apex, from its pointed top; and they wore a laurel wreath and a long white woollen robe. The four Augurs were those who interpreted omens, and were supposed to be able to foretell events, and to discover the will of the gods by certain signs; so that they were consulted on all affairs of importance. The Salians, or priests of Mars, were twelve young men of noble families, whose office was to sing songs and perform dances at the festival of that god, when they were dressed in armour, and carried the ancilia, or sacred shields belonging to the temple of Mars, which were held in superstitious veneration by the Romans, on account of a tradition attached to them.

The Vestal Virgins.

The Vestal Virgins were priestesses of Vesta, whose chief duty was to watch over the sacred fire that was kept perpetually burning in the temple of that goddess. They were all of noble families, chosen by the high priest at an early age, and devoted for [12]thirty years to the service of the temple, after which they were at liberty to give up the office and marry; but if any one married before the expiration of the term, [13]she was punished by the most dreadful of all deaths, that of being buried alive. The young vestals were instructed by the elder ones for ten years in the mystic rites of their worship, before they were considered fit to enter on their duties. The dress of a vestal

Dress, &c., of the Vestals.

was a white woollen robe, edged with purple, and a white fillet round the head. [14] They enjoyed great honours and privileges, being allowed to ride in chariots, attended by a guard. The best places at the public shows and festivals were assigned to them; and if they chanced to meet a criminal being led to execution, he was pardoned. The sacred fire was regarded as emblematical of the existence of the state, and if a vestal suffered it to go out, she was cruelly punished. [15] It was, however, extinguished annually on the 1st of March, at the festival of Mars, and rekindled with solemn rites, from the rays of the sun. This day was the commencement of the Roman year.

Religious Festivals.

The religious festivals of the ancient Romans were very numerous, and most of them were said to have been instituted by Numa Pompilius. [16] The anniversary of the foundation day of Rome, or rather that which was supposed to be so, was celebrated on the twenty-first of April, and was a grand day among the country people, who offered up sacrifices to Pales, the goddess of the shepherds, whose flocks were supposed to be under her special protection. Among the rites observed on this occasion by the worshippers of Pales, was that of making bonfires of straw, and running through them to purify themselves by fire and smoke. The festival was concluded by a feast in the open air, at which the people sat on benches of turf, and drank plentifully.[a]

Worshippers of Pales.

Festivals of the Terminalia.

It is said that Numa encouraged husbandry, and instituted [17] the festival of the Terminalia, in honour of Terminus, the God of Boundaries, the object of which was, to prevent encroachments on landed property, by marking the limits of every man's land, as well as of the state domain, before the husbandman commenced the labours of the Spring. The stones that were set up were consecrated to the presiding deity, and sacrifices were

a Smith's 'Antiquities.'

offered to him upon each landmark, after which it would have been deemed an act of sacrilege to remove it.

The legend says, that Numa Pompilius reigned forty years in peace, and died at an advanced age; and here we may notice the mode of electing the kings of Rome. [18] On the death of a sovereign, ten senators were chosen to exercise the supreme authority in turn, each for five days, until they had agreed in the choice of a successor to the throne. The person thus chosen was then to be proposed to the great assembly of the citizens, who had the power to accept or reject him. If they accepted him, it was then the business of the augurs to discover whether the new sovereign was approved by the gods, which they pretended to learn by omens; and if these omens were favourable, the citizens again assembled, to invest him formally with the regal power; that is, provided they found no reason to change their determination; for they still had the right of rejecting him, notwithstanding their former decision.[a]

B.C. 673, Death of Numa, and succession of Tullus Hostilius.

[19] The ensigns of royal dignity were, a white robe with purple stripes, a golden crown, an ivory sceptre, and twelve lictors, or guards, who acted as executioners of justice, and walked before the king, each carrying an axe tied in a bundle of rods.

Tullus Hostilius.

[20] The next king on record is Tullus Hostilius, [21] and the period during which he is said to have reigned, is remarkable for a war with Alba, and the fall of that state. The particulars of this war are unknown, but there is a famous poetical legend relating to it, which is too remarkable to be omitted, although it must not be mistaken for real history.

[22] "LEGEND OF THE HORATII AND CURIATII."

B.C. 667, The city of Alba destroyed, and the Albans removed to Rome.

The Romans had declared war against Alba, and the armies of the two cities stood opposed to each other on the spot that formed the boundary between the two states.

a Niebuhr.

They were about to engage when the Alban prince proposed that instead of a general battle, the quarrel should be decided by champions. Tullus agreed; and three brothers were chosen from each army, who were twins, and the sons of two sisters. The Romans were called Horatii, (the plural of Horatius), and the Albans, Curiatii, (the plural of Curiatius). Fortune at first seemed to favour the Curiatii, who had killed two of their opponents, and were pursuing the third, who was unhurt; but as they were all wounded, they could not keep together; so, as soon as the Roman champion saw they were separated, he turned round, and slew them one by one as they came up with him. The victor marched into Rome with the spoils of the slain, among which was an embroidered cloak, which his sister had worked for one of the Curiatii, who was her lover. When she saw the cloak, and knew he was dead, she began to weep, which so enraged her brother that he stabbed her to the heart. He was tried for murder, and was condemned to death; but he appealed to the great assembly, and his life was spared, in consideration of the service he had rendered to the country.

The Curiatii.

Such is the romantic and fabulous tale connected with the conquest of Alba, which, it is supposed, was overcome by the allied powers of the Latins and Romans, as [23] the conquered territory was shared between them.[a]

[24] The city of Alba was destroyed, and its people were allowed to settle at Rome on the Cœlian hill. They were admitted into the tribe of the Luceres, and thus became citizens of Rome; but the Luceres were not upon an equality with the other two tribes, nor was it till a later period that they were permitted to elect senators. [25] Ancus Marcius, the fourth king on the list, is called, in the legendary history of Rome, the grandson of Numa Pompilius, and is said to have revived the religious

Conquest of Alba.

B.C. 642. Death of Tullus Hostilius, and succession of Ancus Marcius.

a Niebuhr.

observances which, during the wars of his predecessor, had been neglected. [26]We are told of several Latin cities being taken by the Romans during this reign; from which it is inferred, that after the conquest of Alba, the Romans were at war with the Latins, whose towns were on both sides of the Anio, in a semi-circle about Rome.

The Romans and their treatment of conquered nations.

[27]The Romans did not treat the nations they conquered as slaves, but as subjects. They gave them the protection of the laws; restored a part of their lands, to be held of the state; [28]and in the case of the Latins, the Aventine hill was assigned for the abode of such as chose to remove to Rome; and thus it became the site of the Plebeian city, and might be called a suburb of Rome. From the settlement of the Aventine may be dated the foundation of the Plebeian class, or free commons of Rome, in which were ranked [29]all who did not belong to the original houses or tribes; so that many among the Plebeians, being the nobles of the conquered states, were equal to the Patricians in wealth and illustrious birth.

Ancus Marcius is said to have been the founderof Ostia, a town at the mouth of the Tiber, which was the port or harbour of Rome, and the oldest Roman colony known in after ages.

Roman Colonies.

[30]Colonies were cities or lands which the Roman people were sent to inhabit. They marched to their destination like an army with colours flying, headed by commissioners, who, on their arrival, assigned to each man a portion of land, the boundary of which was marked by drawing a plough around it, this being a sacred ceremony among the Romans. Augurs and priests were always present on the occasion, and sacrifices were offered to the God of Boundaries. The anniversary of the settlement was kept by an annual festival, and each colony had usually a patron, who took care of its interests at Rome.[a] [31]The colonists were

Sacred cere-

[a] Adam's 'Roman Antiquties.'

mostly settled in garrisons, fortified towns taken from the enemy, and received grants of land instead of pay. [32] A third of the territory belonging to the town was usually taken for this purpose, and the rest was restored to the inhabitants, who had to pay tribute to the conquerors.[a] The Romans, thus settled in any place, were lords and masters over the original inhabitants, who often revolted, and tried to expel them.

Foundation of Ostia, the sea-port of Rome.

The early foundation of Ostia serves to show that the Romans must have been engaged in foreign trade, otherwise it could have had no object; but it is a question whether this trade were confined to the Patricians and their clients, or whether it were open to the Plebeians also. The Patricians, no doubt, exported the wool and hides of the numerous flocks and herds fed on their pasture lands, and probably much of the Roman commerce was carried on for the benefit of the government, as the king had large domains of his own, some arable, some pasture land, with vineyards and olive yards; so that he was in a condition to trade with foreign countries.[b]

B.C. 617. Ancus Marcius died; and Tarquin the elder became king.

[33] The successor of Ancus Marcius, according to the Roman annals, was Tarquinius Priscus, whose whole story, as given in the ancient histories, is believed to be a fabrication. [34] He is represented as a wealthy Etruscan, who came as a stranger to settle at Rome, where the splendour in which he lived, together with his liberality, made him extremely popular. [35] The legend says, that his future greatness was foretold by an omen on his first approach to Rome, when an eagle flew down, and carried off his cap into the air, as he and his wife were gazing from his chariot upon the city before them. In a few minutes the bird again descended, and replaced the cap on his head; and by these signs, his wife, who was skilled in augury, knew that he was destined to be king. Then the story goes on to say,

Tarquinius.

a Niebuhr. b Dr. Arnold.

that Tarquinius was highly favoured by Ancus, and served in his wars, and that when the king died, he was chosen to succeed him.

A Foreigner and the Throne.

[36]Now, from all that can be learned of these uncertain times, there seems reason to believe, that about the period assigned to the accession of Tarquinius Priscus, some foreigner, that is, one who was neither a Roman nor a Sabine, gained the throne by his wealth and personal reputation. He might have been an Etruscan, or he might have been a Latin, for his name and race are alike uncertain; but it appears certain that the later kings were of foreign extraction, and that, under their dominion, the power and extent of Rome was far greater than it had ever been before.[a] The city was also embellished by many magnificent works, which were certainly performed under the auspices of these last sovereigns, and some changes were made in the constitution, and the religious worship of the Romans.

Great public buildings in the reign of Tarqui.

[37]The chief works ascribed to the reign of Tarquinius Priscus are, the Cloacæ, or great common sewers, to carry off the water from between the Palatine, Aventine, and Capitoline hills; the Circus, or great race course, between the Palatine and Aventine, for chariot and horse races; and the Forum, or market place, between the Palatine and Capitoline. All these noble works were realities; though nothing is known with certainty of the princes to whom they owed their origin. The cloacæ were a great public benefit, as the low ground between the hills was covered with lakes and marshes until the construction of these drains, the foundations of which were laid forty feet under ground, and the branches from the principal one carried in various directions under the city, and brought into one channel, which ran into the Tiber. The cloaca maxima, or principal drain, was formed of three tiers of arches, one

The Cloacæ.

a Niebuhr.

within another, of such dimensions that thepassage within the innermost was fourteen feet in width.[a] The antiquity of this stupendous work, parts of which still exist, is proved by the stone used in its construction, which is a volcanic substance, found in many places about Rome, but which was not used in the time of the Commonwealth, when the general building stone was the peperino, found in the Alban hills.[b]

Draining of the valleys.

When the valleys were thus drained, one was formed into a race course, where the great or Roman games were held, consisting of chariot and horse races, wrestling, and processions, in which the images of the gods were carried gaily decorated, and accompanied by music and dancing. At first, there were no regular seats round the course, but a number of temporary stages were erected by the Patricians, for the members of their own families. In a short time, however, the open space was converted into a vast circus, with rows of stone seats around it,[c] every man of rank having his place assigned to him.[d]

The Forum.

The Forum was a place where public meetings were held, justice administered, goods sold, and commercial business transacted. It was partly surrounded by a covered way, beneath which were the shops and stalls; so that it was, in fact, the market place.

Public works.

[38]All these public works were done, as in Egypt, by forced labour, and the traditions of the times give a sad account of the miseries brought on the people in consequence; but the government that could have accomplished such vast objects by task-work must have been both powerful and despotic; and such a government could not have existed, unless it had been supported by a large extent of dominion.[e]

Among the wonderful tales that embellish the poetical

a Smith's 'Greek and Roman Antiquities.' *b* Dr. Arnold.
c Smith's 'Antiquities.' *d* Niebuhr. *e* Dr. Arnold.

legend of Tarquinius Priscus, is that of a miracle performed by one of the augurs, who, we are to suppose, was aided by the gods, in order to inspire the king with a belief in the mysteries of augury, in which like a wise man, he was inclined to put but little faith.

Tarquinius and the Augur.

The king, so says the story, was contemplating some change in the constitution of the state, which was opposed by one of the augurs, on the ground that it was contrary to the will of the gods. Then Tarquinius, desirous of showing that the augur did not possess the power which he pretended, thought of a plan to put the matter to the test. "Come now, thou augur," said he, "tell me whether the thing I have in my mind may be done or not?" The augur, after a few moments' reflection, boldly replied that it could be done. "Then" said the king, "I was thinking that thou should'st cut in two this whetstone with this razor; take them, and do it if thou can'st, then will I believe in thy art." The augur, we are told, cut the stone through with the greatest ease, and the king obeyed his counsels ever afterwards.

Extension of Roman Territory.

Tarquinius Priscus is represented as a great warrior, and as having considerably extended the Roman territory by conquests over the Latins. He is said to have met his death by assassination, after a reign of thirty-eight years; and it is stated that the assassins were employed by the sons of Ancus Marcius, who thought they had a right to the throne. But this is, evidently, a false assertion. In the first

The Throne.

place, the throne was not hereditary; therefore the sons of the kings had no more right to it than anybody else. In the next place, if Tarquinius had reigned thirty-eight years, he must have been nearly eighty when this pretended murder took place; yet we are told that his sons had not arrived at the age of manhood. And again, it is contrary to all probability that the sons of Ancus, who were old enough to go out hunting at the time of their father's death, should

wait patiently nearly forty years, and then murder the king, to make way for their own claims, which they then asserted for the first time.[a]

Length of the reigns of Kings.

These, and many other improbabilities with regard to chronology, may naturally lead us to suppose that the reigns of the kings could not have been so long as we are told they were; and, consequently, that the number of sovereigns must have been greater than seven.

[39] During the period ascribed to the reign of Tarquinius Priscus, images of the gods were first introduced into the Roman worship, and the sacrifice of animals, which had been forbidden in the early institutions, was added to the more simple offerings of corn and fruits. Two more vestal virgins were appointed, which made them six instead of four; and the rites of religion were altogether performed with more splendour than in the earlier period of the monarchy.[b]

B.C. 579. Death of Tarquin, and accession of Servius Tullus.

Among the reputed kings of Rome, there is none more celebrated for his good deeds, than [40] Servius Tullus, who, according to Roman annalists, was the successor of Tarquinius Priscus, and owed his elevation to a stratagem of the widowed queen of Tarquinius. The story of Servius is related in various ways by the ancient authors, some making him, like Romulus, the son of a god, while others say that he was a slave, brought up in the palace of the king, whose favour he gained by his extraordinary wisdom and personal bravery. Now whether Servius were a real or fictitious character is a question which none can decide; [41] he is represented as the friend of the commons, and all the laws and institutions that were made for their benefit are attributed to him. [42] The most important of these was the admission of Plebeians to the rights of citizenship, by forming them into tribes and classes, and granting to them the privilege of holding assemblies, distinct from those

Servius a real or fictitious character.

a Library of Useful Knowledge. b Niebuhr.

of the Patricians, to settle their own public affairs, and choose their own magistrates.

Roman people divided into tribes, and national assemblies appointed by Servius.

[43]Thirty new tribes were thus formed, twenty-six in the country, and four in the city: and [44]every man who had received a grant of land from the state became a member of one of these tribes, and, in point of fact, a citizen of Rome; although it was not till a later period that any but the Patricians were called citizens. [45]Each of the new tribes had a chief magistrate, called the Tribune, who was the general of his tribe in war.

[46]The legislature next endeavoured to bring the Plebeians nearer to an equality with the Patricians, by arranging the whole population in classes, which were again divided into military ones, called Centuries. A "century" did not mean a hundred men, although such might probably have been its origin; but the term was applied to each company of soldiers, whatever the number might be. It had been the custom of the Patricians to fight on foot; and the latter had always been so badly armed and ill-disciplined, that they were of little consideration in the army. The new regulations, however, tended to make them of much more consequence, and by that means, to give them a higher degree of importance in the state, as the power of Rome depended entirely on her military force. The richest of the commoners were selected to form new companies of horsemen, and the rest were classed, and obliged to arm themselves according to the amount of their property.[a] Some wore a coat of mail, with greaves, or armour for the legs, a brazen helmet, and a round shield. Others had no coat of mail, but wore a helmet, and carried an oblong wooden shield called "scutum;" others, again, had no defensive armour, but were merely furnished with a pike and javelin. Some of the centuries were classed according to their occupations,

Companies of Soldiers.

The Commoners.

[a] Dr. Arnold.

as carpenters, smiths, hornblowers, and trumpeters, who were all attached to the army, though serving as pioneers rather than as soldiers.

Institution of Military Classes.

[47] It will be easily understood, that by the institution of these military classes, each individual, provided he was a landholder, became a member of some corporate body, and as such, possessed rights and privileges which as an individual, he did not enjoy. For instance, all the centuries of the Plebeian tribes were qualified to give votes on state affairs, for which purpose they assembled, together with the Patricians, on the plain which was called Campus Martius, or the Field of Mars, outside the city. [48] As to the clients, it is not certain whether they were enrolled in the military classes or not; but it is more probable that they followed their lords to the field at their bidding, and constituted a sort of feudal force distinct from the national army of the commons; just as the retainers of the feudal barons of the middle ages were distinct from the free burghers of the cities.

Laws for the benefit of the Commons.

Several other laws for the benefit of the commons are said to have been made by the good king Servius, who also, according to the popular tradition, instituted [49] the festivals of the Compitalia and the Paganalia, the former held in the city, the latter in the country, once a year.

The Compitalia.

[50] The festival called Compitalia was celebrated in honour of the Lares, or spirits of deceased ancestors, and offerings were made to them at every place in the city where streets met or intersected. The Paganalia were held in all the rural districts, on the top of the hills, which were made places of refuge for the people and their cattle, in case of invasion; and from this circumstance, we may imagine the insecure state of the country. On this occasion, a small fee was paid to the priests for every person in the district, man, woman, or child; and thus the amount of the population was ascertained.[a]

[a] Dr. Arnold.

Among the works ascribed to Servius Tullus, was that of building walls around the city, taking in all the seven hills; and these continued to be the walls of Rome for eight hundred years, till the time of the emperor Aurelian.

[51]The legend of Servius Tullus ends with a tragical account of his death, by violence, after a glorious reign of forty-four years. We are told that he was deposed and murdered by the son of Tarquinius Priscus, who was also named Tarquinius, and was married to the aged monarch's daughter. Many circumstances of horror are mingled with the tale; but it is not worth while to repeat them, because the whole story is supposed to be fabulous; and one reason for this opinion is, that, if it were true, Tarquinius must have been at least seventy years old at the time of his usurpation; after which he is said to have reigned twenty-five years, and then to have carried on wars for the recovery of his throne for fifteen years longer.[a] The only points that can be relied on as historical are, that Rome, under her latest kings, was the capital of a great state; that towards the end of the monarchy, political rights were first granted to the commons, that the patricians were opposed to this new constitution, and aided a prince to mount the throne who speedily deprived the Plebeians of their newly-acquired rights, and that this prince was, in the end, banished for his tyranny.

Servius murdered by Tarquin the Proud, who became king.

Granting of Political Rights.

The last king of Rome.

[52]Tarquinius, the last king of Rome, was undoubtedly a tyrant, whose chief object was [53]to degrade the commons to the same state in which they were before the establishment of the free constitution. [54]It appears that many of the laws which had been made in their favour were abolished, heavy taxes imposed on them, and the poorer classes were again made to labour for almost nothing at the public works. [55]It was this king who built the great temple and fortress, called the Capitol, which was dedicated

a Library of Useful Knowledge.

to Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva. It was erected on the Capitoline hill, and was a work of immense labour, for there was no flat surface on the hill sufficiently large for the basement; so that the peaks had to be levelled, and a space walled in and filled up, before the foundation could be laid. The king sent to Etruria for artists to superintend the building of this noble edifice, which was constructed of hewn stone, with gates of brass. The Sibylline books were kept in this temple, underground, and placed under the charge of certain priests appointed for that purpose. They contained a great number of prophecies, written in Greek, on palm leaves,[a] and were consulted by the augurs on all extraordinary occasions.

The Capitol.

There is a strange legend connected with these oracles which may account for the superstitious veneration in which they were held by the Romans, even to a late period:

The Oracles.

The story is, that an old woman, of singular appearance, presented herself before Tarquinius, with nine books, for which she demanded a large sum of money. The king, not knowing what they were, refused to buy them, and the old woman went away. Presently she returned with six books, having burned the other three; but she still asked the same sum as at first. Tarquinius was not more inclined to take them than before, on which the ancient dame again departed, and consigned three more of her volumes to the flames. She came a third time, still asking as much money for the three that remained, as she did at first for all the nine; and then the king, by the advice of the augurs, bought the books; and the old woman, who was a sibyl, or prophetess, immediately disappeared, and was never seen afterwards.

The Sibyl.

It scarcely need be said, that this story is as fabulous as any other fairy tale; but it was believed by the Romans, and is the only account of the origin of the Sibylline books,

a Niebuhr.

long regarded at Rome as sacred oracles. Such books, however, were not uncommon in the cities of Greece and Etruria, and from the former country they are supposed to have been brought.[a]

The Roman Government.

56 The Roman government had become a complete despotism. The king was a tyrant, and oppressed the nobles no less than the commonalty; so that at length they resolved to put an end to the monarchy, and establish a republican form of government.

B.C. 510. Tarquin dethroned, and driven into banishment.

57 How this revolution was brought about, is not known with any certainty, as the accounts of it are not authentic; but there is no doubt that the last king of Rome was deposed, and the sovereign power conferred on two magistrates, called Consuls, who were to be elected annually.

B.C. 509. Two Consuls chosed annually, to govern instead of kings.

58 One of the first consuls was Brutus, who is usually represented as a nephew of the king, but was, most probably, a Plebeian,[b] who distinguished himself as a leading man in the revolution. His elevation to supreme power has led to a conjecture that the nobles and commons united their efforts to expel the tyrant from the throne, and establish a new constitution, with the understanding that one of the future rulers should be a Patrician, and the other a Plebeian.

Patrician and Plebeian.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter

1 How many kings are mentioned in Roman history?
2 What was the duration of the monarchy?
3 How were the records of public transactions preserved?
4 What became of the records?
5 How was the loss repaired?
6 What was the extent of the Roman monarchy?
7 Who was the second of the seven kings?
8 In what light is the character of Numa regarded?
9 Who was the high priest of the Roman religion?
10 What were the principal religious officers?
11 What were their respective duties?
12 How long did the vestals continue in office?

a Niebuhr. b Niebuhr.

Questions on the Chapter.

50 Describe them.
51 How does the story of Servius end?
52 Who was the last king of Rome?
53 What was his aim?
54 What was the condition of the common people under his government?
55 Which was his greatest public work?
56 Why was the monarchy abolished?
57 What is known with respect to this revolution?
58 Who was Brutus?

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ROMANS

IN THE TIME OF THE FIRST MONARCHY

Domestic habits.

VERY little is known with certainty respecting the domestic habits of the Romans in the time of the kings. [1]Rome was decidedly a military state, and the people were all trained to arms; but it was also an agricultural nation, and the whole of the commonalty consisted of farmers, who cultivated their land in time of peace, and took the field when their services were required as soldiers.

Foreign commerce.

[2]Foreign commerce, as already observed, was in all probability kept in the hands of the nobles, as it used to be in Russia; and [3]retail trade was held in such low estimation, that the free commons, or Plebeians, were prohibited by law from engaging in it.[a] [4]The clients were the only shopkeepers of ancient Rome, and it was they who carried on such mechanical arts and trades[b] as were required to supply the wants of a people to whom luxury was as yet unknown.

[5]The manner of living was extremely simple. The principal food of all classes consisted of bread and pottage, with herbs, roots, and fruit; and the chief beverage was

a Niebuhr. *b* Library of Useful Knowledge.

the milk of goats; for wine was so rare and costly, that it was seldom used even in offerings to the gods.[a] The great fared no better than the humble, but sat down to their homely meals with their dependents, and despised luxurious habits as unbecoming a warlike nation.

[6]The houses at Rome in those early times were mere cottages, only one story high, built of wood, and thatched with straw or covered with shingles. They had neither chimneys nor windows, the only mode of admitting the light being by small apertures in the wall, so that the inner rooms were quite dark, unless lights were burning in them. Candles were used in very early times, made either of wax or tallow, with rush wicks. Oil lamps were a later invention.[b] The furniture, no doubt, corresponded with the rudeness and simplicity of the dwelling; and all the affairs of the household were managed by the mistress. [7]The domestic servants, both male and female, were slaves.

Domestic servants.

[8]The women of Rome enjoyed much more liberty and independence than those of other ancient nations; for they mixed freely in society, and could hold property in their own right: nor were they, like the Greeks, under subjection to their husbands, and considered as inferior to them, but were treated with equal respect, and protected by law from ill usage. [9]Among the domestic employments of the Roman ladies of rank, spinning and weaving seem to have been regarded as the most feminine and praiseworthy.

The Roman women

There is a well-known story told with reference to the banishment of the last king of Rome; which, although it is most likely fabulous, may serve to illustrate the manners of the times, and, with that view, is worth relating.

The last king of Rome.

[10]This legend says that the two sons of Tarquinius being with the army on a campaign, were one night feasting with their cousin Collatinus, when the conversation hap-

a Smith's 'Antiquities.'

b Smith's 'Antiquities.'

pened to turn upon their wives, and each praised his own as the best lady in the world, and superior to those of his companions. At last, getting heated with the dispute, they agreed to decide the question, by riding off to Rome, and seeing how the ladies were employed in their absence. The king's sons found their wives enjoying themselves at supper with a party of friends, at which they were not very well pleased; especially when, on proceeding to the house of Collatinus, they saw Lucretia, his wife, spinning in the midst of her maidens. It is added, that the beauty and modesty of this industrious matron so charmed one of the princes, that he returned in a few days, and attempted to carry her away by force, although he had a wife of his own; and when she refused to go, he threatened to kill her. The sequel is, that the poor lady, in consequence of his violent conduct, terminated her own existence, and that this event occasioned the revolt that ended in the expulsion of the king and all his family.

The legend of the wives.

No one can say, at this distant period, whether there were any foundation for such a tale; but as it is at best a very doubtful one,[11] it must not be considered historical, although there is a possibility that some portion of it may be so. After the fall of a great family, their bad actions are very often exaggerated, especially by those whom they have oppressed; and as there were, no doubt, many songs and poems relative to the tyranny of Tarquinius and his sons, some purely inventive, others founded upon some slight grounds, the story of Lucretia may be one of them.

The story of Lucretia.

[12] The national poetry of the early Romans was mostly of this character, something like our old English ballads of Robin Hood and Chevy Chase,[13] and as such ballads were used as authorities in compiling a new history of the monarchy after the destruction of the ancient records, it is no wonder that so little reliance can be placed on it. The deeds of every prince and popular hero were celebrated in

National poetry.

poems of this kind, which used to be sung at feasts, by the guests in turn, to a flute accompaniment; and when any great person died, verses in his praise were composed to be sung at his funeral; [14] the singers walking in the funeral procession, with flute players to accompany the melancholy lay. The Romans burned the bodies of the dead, and it was customary for the great to have a funeral oration spoken on the occasion.

The mourning dress.

The mourning dress was a black toga, or mantle, and this garment was the distinguishing part of the Roman costume. It was [15] a large woollen shawl, in the form of a semi-circle, usually white, but sometimes bordered with scarlet or crimson; and as it is by some writers called a gown, it might have been, in early times, worn over a loose robe, without sleeves, for the arms were bare, except that they were covered by the toga, one end of which was thrown over the right shoulder, and served to cover the head. The togas of slaves and poor people were of a dark colour. They were worn at this period by both sexes. In after times, the Romans wore with the toga a kilt, or petticoat, like the Scots, except that it was white, with a coloured border. [16] The sagum was a military robe, open in front, and fastened with clasps. This dress was worn by the citizens as well as soldiers, in times of danger.

The Romans had various coverings for the feet, but they were chiefly of two kinds, the one a shoe, not unlike our shoes, and the other a slipper or sandal, fastened on with leathern thongs. The beard was long, but the hair short; and the head never covered, except at sacred rites and festivals, or on occasions of mourning, when it was usual to throw the lappet of the toga over the head.

Young men and women.

[17] Young men till the age of seventeen, and the young women until they were married, wore a dress bordered with purple, when it was changed for one of white. [18] The ceremony of changing the toga was performed with religious

rites, either in the Capitol, or some other temple, usually at the time of the feast of Bacchus, which took place in March; when the youth was conducted by his father to the Forum, accompanied by his friends, and there recommended as a pupil to some great orator. When the formalities of the day were ended, the friends and dependants of the family were entertained with a feast, and small presents were distributed among them. The ceremonies are mentioned as having been observed in the time of the kings, as it is stated that Servius made a law that every one, on assuming the manly toga, should send a piece of money to the Temple of Youth.[a]

Ceremonies.

[19] The power of a father over his children was so absolute that he might even sell them for slaves, or put them to death; nor were they free at any age from parental authority, unless the father himself emancipated them.[b]

Public games.

The social habits of the Romans were intimately connected with their religion. All their public games and festivals were celebrated with religious rites; and the bond of association among a number of persons was the offering of sacrifices to the same divinity. Most of their acts in private life were regulated by signs and omens, as is the case among the Chinese; and in any affairs of great importance, they were in the habit of consulting oracles kept in the Temple of Fortune, in one of the Latin cities. These oracles were sticks, or slips of board, with ancient characters engraved on them,[c] and believed to have been found in a miraculous manner in a rock. When any one wished to consult them, they were shaken up together, and one drawn out; and, the characters, being interpreted, gave the answer to the question proposed.

Fortune-telling.

We may smile in these days to read of the proud and warlike Romans gravely setting out on a journey, to learn

a Dr. Adams' Roman Antiquities. b Dr. Arnold. c Niebuhr.

their future destiny from fortune-telling cards; but such superstitions are inseparable from heathen worship, which teaches a man to believe that every act of his life is presided over by some tutelary divinity, who gives counsel to mortals through the medium of signs and oracles. Each curia[a] was supposed to be under the special protection of one of the gods, or deified heroes, and had its peculiar religious rites, which constituted the bond of union among its members. One part of these observances was a banquet, of which they all partook at stated seasons: and every curia had a common hall for this and other solemnities, in which was placed the sacred hearth, or altar, for sacrifices. In every private house[20] the hearth was consecrated to the lares, or household gods, and was the centre of union to the members of the family.[b] [21] The common hearth of the whole people, that is the symbol of their union as a nation, was the altar in the temple of Vesta, where the sacred fire was always burning, and it was, therefore, considered as an omen of some great national calamity if, by any accident, it were extinguished at any time except on the first day of the year, when, as already stated, the solemn ceremony took place of re-kindling the holy flames.

The hearth.

The altar.

[22] Literature and the arts were but little cultivated at this period by the Romans, although they must have been much improved by their intercourse with the Greeks and Etruscans.

About the time of the fall of the Roman monarchy, Etruria was at the height of its greatness. This country, which is now called Tuscany, produced all the necessaries of life in abundance; and the Etruscans evinced their gratitude for the bounties of nature by their free enjoyment of them. Their style of living, too, was very different from that of the plain, homely Romans, for they used

Etruria at its height.

a It has already been explained that a curia was a clan, or union of several families.

b Library of Useful Knowledge.

embroidered carpets, silver plate, and, like the people of the east, had their trains of beautiful slaves, [a] richly clad, who, no doubt, enlivened their entertainments with songs and dances: and, in short, the Etruscans of the wealthy classes were surrounded with oriental pomp and luxury.

Art. The artists employed at Rome came from Etruria, and at Veii, one of the Etruscan cities, was made a celebrated ornament for the top of the Capitol; being a chariot with four horses, wrought in terra cotta, or baked clay, and regarded as a fine work of art. Bronze was not used till a later period, nor is there any mention made of paintings in the time of the monarchy.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 What was the national character of the Romans?
2 How was foreign commerce conducted?
3 What law existed with regard to retail trade?
4 What were the general occupations of the clients?
5 How did the Romans live?
6 Describe their houses.
7 What was the condition of servants?
8 What was the state of female society at Rome?
9 How did ladies of rank display their industry?
10 Relate the story of Lucretia.
11 Why is this tale doubted?
12 What was the character of the national poetry?
13 How is the history of Rome affected by the ancient ballads?
14 What customs were observed at funerals?
15 What was the toga?
16 What was the sagum?
17 How was the dress of young people distinguished?
18 How was the ceremony of changing the toga performed?
19 What was the extent of parental authority?
20 What part of the house was dedicated to the gods?
21 What was the symbol of national union?
22 How were the arts of Rome improved?

[a] Niebuhr.

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC.

First Consuls.

[1]THE first Consuls chosen by the Romans were Brutus and Collatinus. [2]They were elected for one year, and[3] were, by turn, to exercise the sovereign power for one month, during which they were to be invested with all the ensigns of royalty, except the crown.[a] They[4] did not, however, perform the great sacrifices as the kings had done; but from this time, the Pontifex Maximus, or chief pontiff, was the head of the Roman religion.

Rights of Plebeians.

[5]The Plebeians now recovered some of the rights of which they had been deprived by their late sovereign. Lands were granted to them out of the royal domains, in lots of seven jugers,[b] two jugers being about one-third more than an English acre; and some of the wealthiest persons among them were admitted into the senate.

Plebeian Senators.

[6]The Plebeian Senators were chosen from among those who had been raised by the constitution of Servius to the rank of knights, or horse soldiers; and to distinguish them from the patrician members of the senate, they were called Conscripts. The parliament of Rome was thus made to consist, like ours, of Lords and Commons; yet in a very short time after the revolution, we shall find that the Commons were again as much oppressed as they were before, and the Patricians got all the power into their own hands. [7]The beginning of the new government was disturbed by the attempts of the deposed monarch to recover his throne; and tradition relates that a conspiracy was formed within the city to reinstate him, by some of the nobles, who were dissatisfied at the concessions made to the Plebeians.

a Library of Useful Knowledge. b Dr. Arnold.

Conspiracy against the new government.

It is said that the plot was discovered and revealed by a slave, and that [8] among the conspirators were the two sons of Brutus, who, with others, were condemned to death by their father in his character of consul. Here we are called upon to admire the patriotism and love of justice exhibited by the magistrate, who had the firmness to pass the fatal sentence on his guilty children, and sit by calmly to see it executed. This famous story has immortalized the name of Brutus, and will always find a place in the Roman history; but it may be regarded as one of those fictions that were invented, or, perhaps, borrowed from the legends of other countries, to immortalize and personify justice, and to add lustre to the name of distinguished Romans.

The story of Brutus.

[9] The falsehood of some parts, at least, of the story of Brutus is manifest from this. He is represented, by the ancient historians, as being a child when Tarquinius ascended the throne; yet, when that prince was deposed, which was only twenty-five years afterwards, we are told that his sons were men of an age to take part in a conspiracy against the government. Another reason why we may safely consider the tale of the sons of Brutus as a fable, is, that the plot was laid by the nobles, in order to crush the newly-acquired liberties of the Plebeians, therefore, it is not probable that any members of the family of Brutus, who, there is scarcely any doubt, belonged to the class of Plebeians themselves, would join in an enterprise to destroy their own freedom.[a]

The nobles and the sons of Brutus.

Collatinus.

[10] In consequence of this conspiracy, a decree of banishment was pronounced against the whole of the royal family, and this sentence was so strictly enforced, that even Collatinus, the new consul, was not excepted; and his place was supplied by Publius Valerius, a Patrician,

a Niebuhr.

who was afterwards called Publicola, because he supported the rights of the people.

[11] Brutus was killed during his consulate, in a battle fought against Tarquinius, who had obtained aid from the Etruscans. Publicola, it is said, then ruled alone for the rest of the year, and enacted several good laws, amongst which was one that gave the Plebeians a privilege which, till then, had only been enjoyed by the Patricians. [12] This was the right of appealing to their tribes in case of any unjust sentence being pronounced by a magistrate against them; but this right never extended to more than one mile beyond the city, either for the nobles or the commons.

The first treaty, or alliance between the Romans and Carthaginians

[13] In the first year of the republic, a treaty of commerce, the oldest now extant, was concluded between the Romans and the Carthaginians, and engraved on tables of brass, which were preserved in the Capitol. Carthage was a great commercial city, situated on a small peninsula projecting into a bay, which formed two excellent harbours, about equally distant from either extremity of the Mediterranean sea, and on that part of the African coast which is nearest to Sicily, Italy, and Greece; so that there was not a more convenient place for trade in the then known world. Behind the city lay an immense and fertile continent, which furnished every thing necessary for the support of the citizens, and a great variety of valuable commodities for exportation. The power and wealth of the Carthaginians were derived entirely from foreign commerce; and as they were the superior people, it was they who dictated the terms of the treaty with the Romans, the substance of which was this:—[a]

The Carthaginians

"Let not the Romans navigate beyond the fair promontory;[b] let them not buy or receive any thing but what is necessary for repairing their vessels, or for sacrifice; and let them depart within five days.

a Annals of Commerce. b Cape Bon.

Terms of the treaty.

"Whoever shall come on business of merchandise, let him pay no duties but the fees of the broker and the clerk. If any Romans come to that part Sicily subject to Carthage, let them have impartial justice. Let not the Carthaginians do any injury to the Latin subjects of Rome, nor attack the free towns of the Latins."

[14] This treaty was made about five hundred years before the Christian era.

The history of the first years of the commonwealth is as uncertain as that of the kings, and for the same reason, that most of the records of that period were lost, when Rome was plundered by the Gauls.

The Commons.

[15] For a short time, the Commons, no doubt, shared in the advantages of the revolution; but the rights they had recovered were soon taken from them again by the nobles; and they felt, ere long, that it was as hard to be ruled by an overbearing aristocracy, as by a tyrannical king.

B.C. 501. War with the Latins.

[16] In the meantime, Tarquinius, aided by the Latins and the people of Veii,[a] made great efforts to recover his throne; but he was unsuccessful, and at length retired to one of the Greek cities in Italy, where he died. He had most likely made great promises to the Latins, in case he should succeed, and [17] there can be no doubt they took advantage of the unsettled state of affairs at Rome to recover their own independence; as in less than twelve years from the destruction of the monarchy, all the Latin cities, that were subjected to the Roman dominion by the later kings, had become free.[b]

B.C. 499. Battle of Lake Regillius.

Story of Tarquinius.

There is a story connected with the final defeat of Tarquinius that is too popular to be omitted, although it has no historical foundation. [18] It relates to a personage called Porsenna, who is represented as a king of Clusium, one of the cities of Etruria.

It is stated that Tarquinius applied for aid to Porsenna,

a

b Dr. Arnold.

who marched against Rome at the head of a large army, The wonderful feats performed by the Romans in this war, are told at full length in the poetical narrative, where the magnanimity of the Etruscan prince is also highly extolled. We read that the city was saved by three warriors, who defended a bridge against a whole host of invaders, while their comrades were cutting it asunder; and that one of the three for some time guarded the pass alone, till the bridge fell, when he plunged into the river and swam safely to the shore, amid showers of darts hurled at him by the enemy. Another famous story is that the invaders surrounded the city, so as to cut off all supplies, in consequence of which the Romans were reduced to great distress by famine.

[19] In this extremity, it is said, Caius Mucius, a young Patrician, undertook to rid his country from so terrible a foe as king Porsenna: and having entered the Etruscan camp in disguise, he saw a princely-looking personage sitting in state, distributing pay to the soldiers. Thinking this must be the king, Mucius stabbed him to the heart, on which he was seized and carried before Porsenna, to whom he boldly avowed his purpose.

Caius Mucius.

Porsenna

Then comes the most striking part of the legend, and that to which it chiefly owes its celebrity.

Those who believe in the tale, must surely wonder as much as Porsenna is said to have done at the courage of Mucius, who, we are told, on being threatened with torture if he did not confess the whole plot, put his hand into a fire, and calmly held it there to show how little he cared for pain. The sequel is that the king generously pardoned the youth and set him at liberty; and that Mucius, out of gratitude, told him to be on his guard, as there were three hundred Romans ready to risk their lives in similar attempts. It is not stated, however, that Porsenna fell a victim to any of them; but on the contrary, that the Romans made peace with him, and sent him an ivory

Etruscan conquerors.

throne and sceptre, a golden crown, and triumphal robe; so that we may suppose, at any rate, that the Etruscans were conquerors in this war, and that their sovereignty over Rome was acknowledged.

Now the character of Porsenna is believed to be fabulous;[20] but there is no reason to doubt that, about this time, although the exact date is not certain, Rome was conquered by the Etruscans. The city was surrounded, the Romans even gave up their arms, and were forbidden to use iron, except for the purpose of husbandry.[a] This war, probably, had nothing to do with the exiled royal family, but was an invasion of the Etruscans, with a view to conquest.

Submission of the Romans.

Perhaps they thought that the unsettled state of affairs at Rome afforded them a favourable opportunity of regaining the territory that had been won from them by the kings of Rome; but however that might be, it is certain that the Romans were forced to submit to some Etruscan or Tuscan[b] prince, and to pay as tribute, a tenth of the produce of the land.[c]

Rome besieged and taken by Porsenna, king of Etruria.

The tradition that speaks of the ensigns of royalty being sent to king Porsenna, may lead to the conclusion, that when Rome was subdued by the Etruscans, the chief who conducted the war was acknowledged as the sovereign of the vanquished Romans; and, in all probability, he ruled for a time over the city.

[21] But this bondage did not last long; for the Romans, although they had been deprived of their arms, made a desperate effort for the recovery of their independence; and, taking advantage of a time when the power of the

Defeat at Aricia.

Etruscans was shaken by the defeat at Aricia, the chief city of Latium, they revolted against their conquerors and were once more a free people.

a Niebuhr.
b At this period, the terms were used indifferently.
c Niebuhr.

These events are only known by means of a few unconnected annals; so that we cannot tell how the Romans contrived to emancipate themselves, and drive the strangers from their city;[22] but it is certain that they did not recover their territory on the Etruscan side of the Tiber, and that all the lands added to the Roman possessions, during the space of one hundred and twenty years after the downfall of the monarchy, were on the north-east of Rome, between the Tiber and the Anio.[a]

Position of possessions.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who were the first Roman Consuls?
2 What was their term of office?
3 Did they rule jointly?
4 What high dignity was separated from the sovereignty?
5 How did the Plebeians benefit by the change of government?
6 Who were termed Conscripts?
7 How was the peace of the Republic disturbed?
8 What story is told of Brutus?
9 Why is this story doubted?
10 What was the consequence of the conspiracy?
11 What became of Brutus?
12 What privilege was granted to the Plebeians by Publicola?
13 What is the oldest treaty of commerce extant?
14 What is the date of this treaty?
15 Did the Commons retain the rights they had gained?
16 What became of the banished king?
17 How was the Roman dominion lessened?
18 Who was Porsenna?
19 What famous story is related in connection with this war?
20 What is supposed to have happened about this time?
21 How did the Romans recover their liberty?
22 Did they regain all their former territories?

a Dr. Arnold.

REVOLT OF THE PLEBEIANS.

Patrician tyranny.

[1] FROM the time that Rome was freed from the domination of the Etruscans, it seems to have been the object of the Patrician order to depress and enslave the Plebeian classes. The many privileges restored or granted to the latter, in the beginning of the Commonwealth, were gradually taken away; the lands that had been given to them were resumed: the taxes increased, and the consulship was no longer shared by the two orders, but both consuls were chosen from among the Patricians.

The loss of the conquered lands beyond the Tiber, had deprived great numbers of families of their little farms, and consequently of their means of subsistence; and, in short, the great mass of the commons was suffering under the pressure of a most tyrannical government.

The Patrician classes.

[2] It may here be observed, that the Patrician classes were not now confined to the old nobility, that is, to members of the original houses, but included many who by wealth and influence, had obtained admission into that order.

Condition of the Plebeians.

[3] Neither must it be supposed that all Plebeians were poor men; on the contrary, there were many among them who were both rich and great. In reading, therefore, of the distress of the Plebeians, we are to include also the [4] numerous class of small farmers that constituted by far the greatest proportion of the common people.

[5] The chief cause of the increasing poverty of the Commons was, that they were burdened with taxes far beyond their means; and, in order to pay them, were obliged to borrow money at exorbitant interest, so that they became involved in debts which they were not able to discharge; and then, according to the Roman laws, [6] they became the slaves of their creditors. The only protection they had was the right of appealing to their tribes, in case of an unjust

sentence; but this privilege also was taken from them by the appointment of a new magistrate, called the Dictator,[7] who was elected for six months, during which he had the power of an absolute sovereign within the city, and one mile beyond it, the distance to which the right of appeal extended; and from his sentence there was no appeal, at least for the Commons.

Dictator, or Supreme Magistrate appointed.

The election of this powerful magistrate was conducted much in the same manner as that of the kings, and he was invested with the ensigns of royalty. In fact, he was an absolute monarch, whose reign was limited to six months.

The consuls were still continued, but the Dictator was a higher magistrate, and[8] the real object of the institution of this office, was to deprive the Commons of their few remaining rights, and. by a rigorous enforcement of the law relating to debt, to reduce them to a state of slavery.

It has already been observed that one cause of the distress of the people, was a ruinous system that prevailed at Rome of borrowing money at an exorbitant rate of interest. There were no laws against usury, so that they who lent money were at liberty to charge as much as they pleased for doing so; and thus a small debt often became a very large one. [9] In most countries, the rate of interest is fixed by law; that is, if I lend you a sum of money, you must pay me so much a-year for the use of my money, until you are able to return it; and this is called interest. But if I make you pay more than the law allows, it would be termed usury, and I might be punished for it. [10] At Rome, however, no such law existed; and what made the matter worse was, that [11] if a poor man incurred a debt in this manner, and could not pay it, he and his children became the slaves of his creditor, who might, and often did, treat them with the utmost barbarity.

Usury.

Interest.

At the period of which I am now speaking, the increasing distresses of the Plebeians, in consequence of the heavy

burdens imposed upon them, frequently drove them to the dangerous expedient of borrowing money, to supply their immediate necessities; and [12] the Patricians were very ready to lend, because this was one means of getting the lower orders more completely into their power. The usual mode of granting a loan was this:—

[13] The borrower was required to enter into an engagement that if he did not pay the debt by a certain day, ten months being the usual term allowed, he would surrender himself to the creditor to work out the debt by servile labour. This agreement was called a nexum, and the person who thus pledged himself was called Nexus.

Debtor and creditor.

When the day came, if the debt were not paid, the creditor claimed possession of the debtor before a magistrate; and the unfortunate man was formally assigned to him as a slave, together with all his property, which included such of his children and grandchildren as were subject to his authority, and who became slaves also.

Father and son.

This was the main reason why the Romans often emancipated their sons from control, as soon as they arrived at manhood, just as they would give freedom to a slave;[a] for without this ceremony, there was no age at which a son ceased to be subject to his father, and treated as his property.[b]

[14] If a man, for the sake of his family, refused to enter into a nexum, yet could not pay his debt when it was due, he was led in chains to the Forum, on three successive market days, to see if any person would come forward to pay it for him; and, if no one appeared, he might either be put to death, or sold for a slave into Etruria.[c]

Constitution of Servius.

These cruel enactments had been abolished by the laws called the Constitution of Servius; but they were restored by Tarquinius, and, although not acted upon for a short

a Niebuhr. b Dr. Arnold. c Dr. Arnold.

time after the revolution, they were again in full force at the time of which I am now speaking.

15 The misery of the Plebeians was still farther augmented by the basest injustice. They were all soldiers, and those who were pledged for debt were obliged to serve in the field the same as others; yet their share of the spoils, which might have helped them to pay their debts, was withheld from them, while the debts themselves were getting larger by the addition of the interest.

After every sitting of the courts of law, it was a common sight to see numbers of unhappy debtors led away in chains to the houses of the Patricians, which all had prisons attached to them, where they were subjected to the most inhuman treatment, without any means of protection.

B.C. 495. Revolt of the Plebeians against the Patricians.

Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the people were at length driven to revolt openly against their oppressors, who, in their own defence, were obliged to make some important concessions, that gave a new aspect to the affairs of the Plebeians. The particulars of the insurrection are thus related:—

The Forum.

One day, an aged man, whose appearance bespoke want and suffering, rushed into the Forum, crying aloud for protection. A crowd soon gathered around him to hear his tale, when he stated that he had served as a captain in the army, and had fought many battles for his country: that during the last campaign, his farm had been destroyed by the enemy, and his family thereby reduced to the greatest distress; yet that the taxes had been demanded as usual, and he had been obliged to borrow money to pay them. Unable to discharge the debt, he had been condemned to slavery, together with his sons, and had just escaped from the prison of his creditor, where he had been kept in chains, almost starved, and cruelly beaten.

Some doubts exist as to the truth of this story;[a] but it.

[a] Niebuhr.

may be received as a correct picture of the misery that was but too general, and the tyranny that caused it.

However, this or some other incident occasioned [16]a violent tumult, and the people refused to march against the Volscians, a neighbouring nation then at war with Rome. [17]In this emergency, Servilius, one of the consuls, issued a proclamation that all who were in bondage for debt, might, if they chose, quit their prisons to join the army; and that, while they were under arms, their children should not be kept in slavery, nor their property be touched.

The Volscians.

It may easily be supposed that all were glad to leave their dungeons on these terms, and a victory was gained over the enemy.

[18]The trumphant army marched back to Rome, laden with spoils; when, to the surprise and indignation of the whole community, the debtors were ordered back to their prisons, by the Consul Appius Claudius, a powerful and haughty Patrician, whose whole family prided themselves upon their contempt for the Plebeians. A general insurrection ensued. [19]A large body of Plebeians took possession of a hill beyond the Anio, where they fortified themselves, and resolved to found an independent city, unless the ruling class would agree to their demands; [20]which were, to restore the law by which the property alone, and not the person, of a debtor, should be liable for his debts; and to grant to the Plebeians the right of choosing from among themselves two magistrates, to protect their liberties, whose persons should be held sacred under all circumstances; and moreover, that any one who injured these magistrates, should be outlawed: a sentence which not only involved banishment, but withdrew the protection of the laws from the offender, so that any one might kill him with impunity. [21]The Patricians, fearing the consequence of this outbreak, agreed to the proposed terms. All who were in bondage for debt were set free; those who had pledged themselves

Insurrection.

Demands of the people.

Election of new magistrates.

were released from the obligation of becoming slaves; and the two new magistrates were elected, whose office was to protect the Commons from oppression, and to rescue debtors from the power of their creditors, if that power were unjustly or capriciously exerted.[a]

B.C. 493. The dispute settled, and Tribunes of the people first appointed.

[22]These magistrates were called Tribunes, which was not a new title, but they had more power than had belonged to the former Tribunes, who were only the chiefs of their respective tribes; whereas the authority of the new Tribunes extended over the Commons at large. [23]Their houses stood open day and night, that the injured might seek aid at any time; and although they could not act as judges, or impose penalties on the Patricians, they could summon them before a court of the Commons, to be judged there. In short, the institution of the Tribunes was the greatest step yet made towards the freedom of the people; but they had still to maintain a very hard struggle before their rights were fully established.

Success of insurgents.

Having succeeded in their object, the insurgents returned to Rome, and the spot of which this great deliverance had been effected, was ever after called the Sacred Mount. The field of Runnymede, where King John signed Magna Charta, was not more dear to the English than the Sacred Mount to the Romans, [24]who built an altar on the summit, where annual sacrifices were offered to Jupiter, on each anniversary of their triumph.

Quarrels between the Plebeians and Patricians. B.C. 461.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 What was the state of the Plebeians when Rome was freed from the Etruscans?

2 Who formed the Patricians of this period?

3 Did the term Plebeian apply only to the lower orders?

4 What class of people composed the mass of the commons?

[a] Dr. Arnold.

Questions on the chapter.

5 How was the distress of the Commons occasioned?
6 What was the law with regard to debtors?
7 What was the Dictator?
8 Why was this office created?
9 What is meant by interest and usury?
10 Did the laws of Rome protect men from usury?
11 How were insolvent debtors treated?
12 Why were the Patricians willing to lend?
13 What was a nexum?
14 What became of those who were not Nexus?
15 How were the people still further oppressed?
16 What was the consequence of these oppressions?
17 How was the tumult appeased?
18 Why was the insurrection renewed?
19 How did the Plebeians act on this occasion?
20 What were their demands?
21 What was the result?
22 How were the new magistrates designated?
23 How was their power exercised?
24 How did the people commemorate their triumph?

AGRARIAN LAWS.

Citizens and Commons.

AT the time when the treaty was concluded between the Citizens and the Commons, as though they had been two rival nations, there happened to be [1]a very good consul, named Spurius Cassius, who was inclined to be a friend to the people, a desire that cost him his life in the end, as we shall find.

[2]This excellent and patriotic individual formed an alliance between the Romans and the Latins, who, as before stated, had recovered their independence since the fall of the monarchy, and were no longer in subjection to Rome as they were in the time of the kings.

Latium was again a free state, consisting of thirty cities, each governed by its own senate; and it must have been at least equal to Rome in power since[3] the treaty declared

The Romans and Latins.

that the Romans and Latins should henceforth be allies on equal terms; that they should assist each other against their respective enemies; that the spoils of war, whether lands, or the plunder of towns, should be shared equally between them; and that all private quarrels and lawsuits should be tried in the court of that city where the dispute took place. This treaty was engraved on a pillar of brass, and set up in the Capitol.

Spurius Cassius.

Seven years afterwards, Spurius Cassius was again elected consul, and knowing how much the power of a state may be increased by its alliances, he made a similar treaty [4] with the Hernicans, a brave and numerous people, inhabiting the country beyond the Apennines, which had a communication with Rome, through a pass in the mountains. These people had been subject to the later kings of Rome, but, like the Latins, had shaken off their dependence on the fall of the monarchy.[a] [5] They were, however, glad to enter into an alliance with the Romans, as a means of protection from the incursions of the Volscians and Aequians; while the Romans, who were also constantly at war with those nations, were greatly benefited by the addition of the Hernicans to their armies.

Agrarian law, for the division of conquered land among the people, first proposed.

[6] Now, Spurius Cassius, seeing that the Plebeians were suffering much distress, proposed a law, while he was yet consul, for a division of land among them. This was called an Agrarian law; but in order to understand the nature of it, we must see how the Roman lands were occupied at this period.

It was a very general opinion among the ancients, that every citizen ought to be a landholder; and that the territory of the state should be divided among the freemen, except so much as was required for the royal domain, the temple lands, and the common or public lands. These commons were always in pasture, and the government

a Niebuhr.

derived a large revenue from them, as it was customary for those who had no pasture land of their own, to pay for the right of sending their sheep and cattle there to graze.

Grants of new territory.

[7]When a new territory was gained by conquest, it was the practice at Rome, to make grants of the cultivated parts of it, on condition that they who received them should pay tribute to the king, of a tenth of the produce, as an acknowledgment that the sovereign was the real owner of the soil.

Plebeians and land.

[8]The Plebeians never received grants of land till the laws of Servius were promulgated; when, as they were raised to a higher degree of importance, and formed a very efficient part of the armies, the beneficent legislator, who framed those laws, thought it but right that they should have a share of what they helped to win; [9]so it was enacted that, after every conquest, a portion of the conquered territory should be assigned to them, in small lots of seven jugers[a] each not liable to tribute, like the lands belonging to the state, but subject to taxes as private property.

[10]The rest of the land acquired was considered as the property of the state; but the use of it was, as before granted to the Patricians, for a tribute of one-tenth of the produce of the corn land, and two-tenths of that of the vineyards and olive-grounds; this difference being made because the corn land wanted seed, and required more labour than was needed for the cultivation of vines and olives.

Holding of states.

[11]The estates thus bestowed were open to be resumed at any time by the government; but as this power was seldom exercised, they often descended to the heirs of the occupiers for many generations, and might be sold by them; but the purchasers always knew that they might be dispossessed at any time, if the state thought proper to claim the land.

a Niebuhr.

It has already been stated, that when Tarquinius was deposed and banished from Rome, the new rulers assigned portions of land to the Plebeians out of the royal domains; but since then, they had not only ejected all these small farmers from the tenements thus granted, but had ceased to pay the tithe from their own lands, so that the expenses of the wars, which were paid by the land-tax, fell entirely on the Plebeians, who were thereby reduced to extreme distress.

Spurius Cassiu's, who proposed the law, charged with treason and executed.

It was to remedy these evils that an [12]Agrarian law was proposed by Spurius Cassius, to the effect that land should be given to all those Plebeians who had none; and that the tithes should be paid, as formerly, from the state lands occupied by the Patricians. This law was passed after a violent opposition, [13]but it was not to come into operation till the following year; so that it did little good, for the consuls of the following year took care that it should not be carried into effect, and their successors acted on the same plan; while the Commons continued to suffer all the miseries attendant on poverty, and the oppressions of a tyrannical government. [14]The excellent man who had exerted himself in their behalf was, at the expiration of his year of office, charged with treason, and beheaded.

Feuds of the nobles.

The feuds of the nobles appear to have been carried on about this period with a ferocious spirit that marks the barbarism of the age. The animosities and the crimes that accompanied them were not noted in the annals of the times; but some notices have been discovered in books of religious rites, kept by the Pontiffs, which shew that political enmity was sometimes fearfully manifested.

The manes.

There was a certain spot near the circus marked with a white pavement, that was consecrated to the manes, or spirits of the dead, because it was the place where the remains of nine illustrious men were buried, who had

been burnt alive in the circus, for opposing the measures of one of the consuls.[a]

If such an atrocious deed as this could be committed, there can be no doubt that other scenes of horror and bloodshed were witnessed, although the chroniclers of events might not dare to record them. The untimely death of Spurius Cassius is a proof that the government was disturbed by violent factions, and that those in power mostly exercised their brief authority to crush their opponents.

The Commons, without effect, demanded the execution of the Agrarian law; and in vain some good and just men among the senators endeavoured, from time to time, to get it put in force. It long continued to be a subject of contention in the Senate, and a just ground of discontent among the people.

Caius Mænius.

[15]At length, they determined to refuse to serve as soldiers till their claim was granted; and one of their Tribunes, whose name was Caius Mænius, declared he would uphold them in this resolution. But the power of the tribune only extended to one mile beyond the city; [16]so the Consuls ordered that the soldiers should be enlisted at some place that was more than a mile from Rome, and that, if any man refused to appear, his house should be burned and his land laid waste.

War with Veii, a city of Etruria, commenced.

[17]About this time, a war broke out with Veii, a city of Etruria, about ten miles distant from Rome. It was a much finer city than Rome, and its inhabitants consisted of two classes of people, the nobles and the serfs, or vassals, who cultivated their lands. There were no free commons in any of the Etruscan cities.

This war lasted nine years, and is rendered famous in Roman history, by the story of an illustrious family that bore the name of Fabius. [18]The Fabian house appears to have been the most powerful among the noble houses of

a Niebuhr.

Rome. The Fabians, like the feudal barons of more modern times, had a numerous band of clients at their command, and for seven years one of the consulships had always been given to a member of this family. The Fabian consuls had acted as oppressively as others towards the Plebeians till about four years after the breaking out of the war with Veii, when they began to think it would be much wiser to conciliate the people than to oppress them; and, in fact, some concessions had become necessary for the safety of the state, as the soldiers would not do their duty in the field, so that the enemy on several occasions gained an easy victory.

The Fabian Consuls.

[19]The Consul Cæso Fabius, therefore, called for the execution of the Agrarian law, and declared himself a friend to the people. He was opposed by the chief part of the senate, and he and all his family were called traitors to the state.

Cæso Fabius.

[20]The hostile feeling that arose from these circumstances between the Fabians and other great houses, induced the former to quit Rome, and form a settlement, with their families and clients, by the river Cremera, near the territory of Veii. There they erected a fortress, and the whole clan being assembled, amounting it is said to above four thousand people, they marched out of Rome, headed by Cæso, the consul, to take possession of their colony. [21]Still they remained true to their country, and took a part in the war against Veii, sallying forth in troops from their fortresses to attack the enemy; and many fabulous tales were told of their wonderful exploits on these occasions.

War against Veii.

Two years and a half had passed away when a fatal blow came on the Fabian house; and of all who bore that noble name, only one individual was saved to perpetuate his race. There are two legends that relate to this dreadful massacre in different ways. The most popular of these says, that all the men of the Fabian house went, on a

The Fabii, a great Patrician family, nearly all destroyed by the people of Veii.

certain day of the year, according to the custom of the Romans, to offer up sacrifices on the Quirinal hill, to the god or hero Hercules, whom they regarded as the founder of their race. They did not arm themselves, because it was usual for an enemy to respect these solemn ceremonies, and refrain from molesting those who were engaged in them. But the Veientines, regardless of the sacred truce that all nations were bound to observe on such occasions, laid in ambush, and slew every one of the devoted band; "so that, of this great house," says the legend, "only one boy remained, who had been left at Rome, and he became a man; for it was the pleasure of the gods that great deeds should be done by the Fabians in after times."[a]

Plot of the Patricians.

[22]Now the way in which this family perished is not known with any certainty: but it is supposed that they were the victims of a plot formed at Rome by some of the Patricians. The individual who survived was not a boy, but a man, who had not emigrated with the rest, because he had not changed his political opinions, as they had done, but still adhered to that party which kept down the Commons.[b]

[23]The war went on with varied success. The corn-fields were ravaged by the enemy; the farm-houses and cattle destroyed; and the peasantry crowded into the city for refuge, in such numbers, that there was danger of a famine; so the Romans, at last, having gained some victories, made peace with Veii, but they were still at war with the [24]Aequians and Volscians.

War broke out with the Acquians and Volscians.

Meanwhile the Commons had never ceased to demand their rights, in which they were, from time to time, supported by the just and good among the Patricians: but these were always the weaker parties, and could, therefore, do no good. [25]The public assemblies of the Plebeians in the Forum were constantly interrupted by young Patricians,

a Dr. Arnold. b Niebuhr.

who united themselves in brotherhood, or clubs, and did not scruple to commit any violence to support their party. [26]At the head of these rioters was Cæso Quinctius, [27]who was cited before the Tribunes for his misconduct; and, although protected from punishment by his powerful relations, fled into Etruria to avoid the fury of the populace. He continued, however, to correspond with his lawless associates, and they formed a conspiracy to massacre the Tribunes and all the leading men of the Commons. Cæso returned at the head of a band of outlaws and runaway slaves, and attempted to surprise the Capitol; but the plot failed; a battle was fought in the city, and, as he is mentioned no more, it is supposed he was killed.

Cæso Quinctius and the rioters.

One of the consuls fell in this tumult,[28] and Quinctius Cincinnatus, the father of Cæso, was elected to the vacant consulship: but he exercised his authority rather to oppress than to relieve the Plebeians, whom he looked upon as the cause of his son's death; and, when the year was out, he retired to his farm.

The Patricians still continued to behave in a most outrageous manner towards the Commons. They thought it no disgrace to employ their daggers, or those of their clients, against such as expressed their discontent. They gloried in breaking up their assemblies by force; would insult their families; abuse them in the streets, or beset their doors with armed slaves, ready to commit some act of violence. Their own houses were so many fortresses, and all had dungeons beneath them, where others besides debtors might be confined.[a]

Patricians and Commons.

Fortresses.

[29]At length the Plebeians rose in a body, and took possession of the Capitol, which they held as a fortress, keeping regular guard night and day, under the command of their Tribunes. The senators were alarmed; and seeing it was necessary to make some concessions, they agreed that the

Rising of the Plebeians.

a Dr. Arnold.

Commons should from that time have the sole right of electing their Tribunes and choosing them from their own order; and thus the disturbance was for a time appeased.

In the meanwhile the Romans had been constantly at war with the Volscians, who had conquered some of the Latin cities that were in alliance with Rome.[30] These wars are rendered memorable by the celebrated story of Coriolanus, which is not altogether a fiction, although much that is unreal is mixed up with it. The following is the story as it is usually told:—

LEGEND OF CORIOLANUS.

Coriolanus. Caius Marcius was a noble Roman youth, who distinguished himself in the wars with the Volscians, and by a daring exploit won their town of Corioli; from which, says the legend, he gained the surname of Coriolanus. But he was haughty, and despised the common people, who therefore refused to confirm his election to the consulate. Soon after this there was a scarcity of corn, which caused great distress among the poor. Then some benevolent Greek prince sent a quantity as a gift, to be distributed among the sufferers; and it would have been given to them had not Coriolanus persuaded the consuls to refuse to let them have it, unless they consented to abolish the office of the Tribunes. The people were enraged; the Tribunes summoned him to appear before the assembly of the Commons, and he was exiled.

Power of the people.

He then quitted Rome, and went to Antium, one of the Volscian cities, where he presented himself to Attius Tullus, the king, to whom he offered his services against his own country, which were readily accepted; and after many victories over the Latins, he marched against Rome. There was great consternation in the city. Embassies were sent to entreat his forbearance; but Coriolanus declared that the only conditions on which he would with-

draw his army from Rome were, that all the Volscian conquests should be given back, and all Roman exiles recalled, and their rights as citizens restored to them, as well as their property. The senate could not accede to these demands without involving themselves in ruin. A deputation of ten senators appeared before him, and humbly entreated that he would make peace on other terms; but he was inflexible. Then all the priests came in solemn procession, but met with no better success. At last, we are told, that all the noble matrons, dressed in mourning, and headed by the wife and mother of the stern exile, proceeded to his camp, and that respect for the command of his aged parent induced him to yield, and so the city was saved.

Coriolanus and the senate.

Coriolanus never returned to Rome; but, according to the legend, lived in exile among the Volscians to a great age. Plutarch, however, says that Coriolanus was assassinated by the people of Antium, who thought he had betrayed their interests.

The Volscians.

There is no story more famous than this in any part of the Roman history, yet there is very little of it that is worthy of belief. [31] Coriolanus was probably an exile; that is, he had been sent away from Rome to live in some other city belonging to the state, for that was the true meaning of exile according to the Roman law.[a] [32] The town in which he settled might have been Corioli, and the name Coriolanus would, in that case, merely mean citizen of Corioli.[b] [33] It is believed, however, that he joined the Volscians at the head of a band of exiles, like himself, in their wars against the Latin cities; and that his patriotism caused him to refrain from taking Rome when it was reduced to great weakness by the loss of its Latin allies, and a fearful pestilence that had long been raging in Italy.

Coriolanus and exiles.

a Niebuhr. *b* Dr. Arnold.

Tale of the preservation of the city.

[34]The date of these events is uncertain, but it is most probable that the fabulous tale of the preservation of the city, was founded on the peace concluded in the year of Rome 295, between the Romans and the Volscians, when the latter entered into municipal relation with Rome, which gave them all the rights of Roman citizens, except that of voting in the assemblies.

[35]The Latins, unable to contend against these united powers, were then obliged to break up their union as a state, and several of the towns placed themselves in dependence on Rome; which thus, in the end, gained great power and advantage from the wars with the Volscians.[a]

Condition of Rome and neighbouring states.

We may readily imagine that Rome and the neighbouring states could not, at that time, have been in a very prosperous condition. The ravages of warfare were visible every where. Many towns were in ruins; much of the country was laid waste; the vineyards and fruit trees had been destroyed, wherever the enemy had come, and many villages and farms were in ashes. [36]On the approach of a hostile force, the peasantry usually fled, with their cattle, to their pagi, or places of refuge, on the hills, where they defended themselves within rude and simple fortifications, formed by ditches and palisades.

Famine and plague at Rome.

But the miseries of war were light in comparison with those of the plague, with which many parts of Italy were visited about this period. It lasted for some years, and was more fatal in its effects at Rome than in any other city; and being attended by a famine, destroyed a large portion of the population.

[37]The war with the Aequians was not yet ended; and in the year that followed the peace with the Volscians, a formidable incursion of that people threatened destruction to Rome in its then weak state. Here we have another

a Niebuhr.

famous story, of which Cincinnatus, the former consul, and father of Cæso, is the hero.

The senate and Cincinnatus

[38] It is said that the senate, being alarmed at the approach of the enemy, thought it necessary to appoint a Dictator; for it should be understood that it was only in cases of great emergency that any one was elected to that high office.

Cincinnatus made Dictator. B.C. 458.

[39] Cincinnatus was the person fixed upon as being the most able to deliver his country from its present difficulties; and therefore it was resolved to invest him with supreme power for six months, and a messenger was sent to him at his farm to require his immediate presence at Rome. [40] He was found busily engaged in ploughing his field, with no clothing but his kilt, as was usual with the peasants when working in the fields: his wife brought him his toga, and he set out instantly. On his arrival at Rome, his friends, and many of the senators, came out to meet him, and he was conducted with great state to his house, twenty-four lictors, with their rods and axes, walking before him, and the multitude crowding round to see the man who was to be their deliverer.

The suspension of business.

[41] The story goes on to tell how the Dictator ordered that all business should be suspended, and likewise that all men capable of bearing arms should assemble in the field of Mars. Then he led them against the Aequians, who were defeated and obliged to give up their arms, and pass under a yoke formed of three spears.

Triumphal return of Cincinnatus.

The victory is followed by the triumphal return of Cincinnatus to Rome, where, according to the fable, he was crowned with a golden crown, and rode to the Capitol in a chariot, the Aequian general Gracchus, and other chiefs, being led in chains before him. We read also a fine description how tables were set out at the door of every house with meat and drink for the soldiers, and how they and the people feasted together with songs and rejoicing.

[42] Such is the brief outline of the legend of Cincinnatus.

the whole of which is extremely doubtful, except the fact of his having been Dictator, and perhaps that of also having gained a victory over the Aequians; but it is a question whether the victory were not achieved by that member of the Fabian house who escaped the fate of his family by remaining at Rome.[a]

It is not certain, therefore, that Cincinnatus really enjoyed the honour of a triumph; but as there were many Roman generals, at various periods, who were thus distinguished, it may be as well to describe this splendid show.

The greatest military honour.

43 A triumph was the greatest military honour that could be attained in the Roman state. It was a solemn procession, in which the victorious general and his army proceeded through the city to the Capitol. The procession was formed in the field of Mars, and passed through the most public streets, which were strewed with flowers, while incense was burned on altars raised in different places. First came the musicians, playing and singing triumphal songs; next the oxen for sacrifice, adorned with flowers; then the spoils taken from the enemy, drawn in waggons; then came the captives of rank, in chains; and after them walked the victors, who were followed by a troop of musicians and dancers. The general himself, crowned with laurel, rode in a circular chariot, drawn by four horses, and his children were usually with him. The consuls and senators walked before him during the republc; but in the time of the emperors, they followed the chariot on foot. The soldiers closed the procession. A part of the spoil was offered to Jupiter; the sacrifices were performed; and then the general gave a sumptuous entertainment to his friends and the chief citizens, in the Capitol.[b]

A triumph.

44 Cincinnatus, while he was Dictator, exiled the tribune

a Niebuhr. b Antiquities of Rome.

that had brought the accusation against his son Cæso, which obliged that young man to leave Rome; and it is supposed that the father exerted all his influence to get himself appointed Dictator, that he might have an opportunity of taking this revenge.[a]

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who was Spurius Cassius?
2 What alliance was formed by him?
3 What were the terms of the treaty?
4 With whom was a similar treaty afterwards made?
5 What were the mutual benefits of this alliance?
6 How did Spurius Cassius propose to better the condition of the lower orders?
7 What was the Roman custom with regard to conquered lands?
8 When did the Plebeians first receive grants of land?
9 How were they distributed?
10 How were the state lands occupied?
11 By what tenure were the state lands held?
12 What was the Agrarian law of Spurius Cassius?
13 How was this law evaded?
14 What was the fate of Spurius Cassius?
15 How did the people endeavour to obtain their rights?
16 How did the consuls act on this?
17 What state was at war with Rome about this time?
18 Which was the most powerful Roman family at this period?
19 How did the Fabians become obnoxious to the senate?
20 What was the consequence?
21 How did the exiles distinguish themselves?
22 What was the fate of this noble house?
23 How did the war proceed?
24 What other nations were at war with Rome?
25 What gave rise to disturbances in the city?
26 Who was the most noted of the rioters?
27 What were his proceedings and ultimate fate?
21 Who was Quinctius Cincinnatus?
29 How did the Plebeians regain their privileges?

a Niebuhr

Questions on the chapter.

30 What remarkable story is connected with the Volscian wars?
31 Who was Coriolanus?
32 How is it supposed he obtained that name?
33 What gave rise to the famous legend respecting him?
34 When did these events take place?
35 How was the power of Rome increased?
36 What were the pagi?
37 With whom were the Romans still at war?
38 Why was a Dictator elected about this time?
39 Who was appointed?
40 What story is told of his election?
41 What more is related of Cincinnatus?
42 Is this tale authentic?
43 What was the greatest military honour bestowed on the Romans?
44 How did Cincinnatus revenge the death of his son?

THE DECEMVIRATE.

The Decemvirate.

IT will be remembered that, in the time of the monarchy, the Plebeians had been granted a settlement on the Aventine hill, and portions of it had been assigned to them as freeholders. Some parts, however, were occupied by Patricians, who had, from time to time, encroached on the possessions of the commoners, so that the latter began to fear they should at last be ejected from their own hill, unless some decisive steps were taken for their protection.

The Tribunes.

[1] The number of Tribunes had been increased to ten, and their power was greater in proportion; [2] so one of them, named Icilius, proposed a law to the senate for alloting the whole of the Aventine to the Commons, for ever, to be their stronghold. The bill was passed, which is a clear proof that the power of the aristocracy was beginning to decline. The hill was very strong, and on the summit stood its citadel. There was no way to it from the city but by foot-paths, as its only carriage road led from one of

the gates to a row of houses on the river side, by the salt magazines and the quay.[a]

[3]By the new law, all persons in occupation of the land were to give it up on being repaid what they had laid out in building, for a great part of the hill was covered with houses, built by the Patricians, and let to the common people. [4]Each dwelling, with the ground belonging to it, was assigned as a freehold to three or four families, not as joint property, but each had one floor or story of the house, and a piece of the land.

The New Law.

We see by this that the houses were then built several stories high; and this partition of property in houses is common in Rome at this day.[b]

B.C. 454. Ambassadors sent to Greece, to obtain copies of the laws of Athens.

Shortly after this important concession, it was determined to revise the laws, which were no longer suited to the circumstances of the times. Commissioners were sent into Greece to learn something of the laws of its states, [5]and ten magistrates were appointed to administer new laws, called Decemvirs, who superseded the consuls, and exercised the supreme power by turns. [6]A Decemvirate means a body composed of ten members, and a Decemvir was one of ten.

B.C. 451. The laws of the 'ten tables' instituted, and the 'Decemvirs,' or ten magistrates, appointed.

The old laws and usages were now amended by many alterations and additions, and being formed into a regular code, [7]were engraved on ten tables of brass, and hung up in the Comitium. Two more tables were afterwards added and the laws of the twelve tables were the basis of all Roman law until the time of the emperors. By this famous code the two orders, that is; the nobles and the commoners, were brought much nearer to an equality. [8]The distinction between patrician and plebeian tribes was done away with, so that all were now called Roman citizens. The tribunes were abolished; and the clients, being admitted into the tribes, no longer

B.C. 450. Laws added, making in all twelve tables.

a Niebuhr. *b* Niebuhr.

formed a separate class, but were reckoned among the Plebeians.[a]

Laws respecting Debt.

The laws with regard to debt were not altered, but we may suppose that, in proportion as the times grew better, there would be less occasion to borrow, and consequently their severity would not be so much felt. [9]The money of this period was all made of copper, or a mixed metal like brass, called Æs. The coin was called As, and originally weighed a pound; but the weight was altered from time to time, so that these coins were not always of the same value; and for that reason, in buying and selling, the money was weighed, not counted. [10]When any one bought land, or houses, or slaves, or cattle, it was necessary for five witnesses to be present while the purchase was made, as no writings were given. Another person attended with a pair of scales to weigh the coin; and the purchaser completed the transaction by laying his hand on the thing purchased, and saying, "This thing I declare to be mine, and I have bought it with this money weighed in these scales."[b]

The first Decemvirate.

The first Decemvirs governed so uprightly, that no opposition was made to a continuance of the same form of government, and [11]Appius Claudius, one of the first Decemvirs was re-elected, with four more Patricians, and five Plebeians, to conduct the administration, and put in force the laws their predeccessors had framed. Appius Claudius was the head of a very powerful family, and was a man of a tyrannical disposition; but he had courted the favour of the multitude, and had thereby succeeded in getting himself elected a second time to the Decemvirate. The new Decemvirs soon began to display the state and authority of kings. Each was attended by twelve lictors, and the rods and axes, which were the symbols of sovereignty, were carried before every one of them. [12]It was soon manifest,

Second appointment of Decemvirs.

a Niebuhr. b Dr. Arnold.

indeed, that they wanted to subvert the new constitution and establish a despotism. They grew tyrannical, and at the end of the year did not resign their office, as it was expected they would have done. Those who opposed them were ill-treated, and it is said that many persons fled from Rome and sought refuge in the Latin cities.[a]

Conduct of the new Decemvirs.

13 The violence and oppression to which the people were subjected under the second Decemvirate, is sufficiently exemplified by the melancholy story of Virginia, which is no fiction, and was, most likely, not the only instance of such acts of tyranny, for the Tribunes having been abolished, there was no one to whom appeal could be made. Virginia was the young and lovely daughter of Virginius, a highly respectable citizen of the Plebeian order, and was betrothed to the ex-tribune Icilius, who had obtained for the Plebeians the grant of the Aventine hill. The Decemvir, Appius, who was an old man, had seen this beautiful maiden, who used to go every morning to a school in the Forum, attended by her nurse, and he fell in love with her, and wickedly resolved to take her away from her father and her betrothed husband. One morning, as Virginia was going to school, a man seized her by the arm, and said she must go home with him, for that she was his slave. Virginia and her attendant called aloud for help, and a crowd immediately gathered round them, when the man declared that the maiden was the child of one of his female slaves, and had been stolen away in her infancy, and brought up by Virginius as his own daughter. He added, that he had just discovered the fact, and now claimed the girl as his property. However, he said, he did not mean to take her by force, but should apply to the chief magistrate and abide by his judgment; so he proceeded at once, followed by the crowd, to the Comitium, with the terrified Virginia. The magistrate was the Decemvir, Appius

The Decemvir, Appius.

Virginia and Appius Claudius.

[a] Arnold.

Claudius, who, with another of the Decemvirs, had been left in charge of the city, while the rest were gone with the army, to repel an invasion of the Aequians.

The Aequians.

Now the man who had seized Virginia was a client of Appius, and employed by him to fabricate this tale as a means of getting her into his power. He had taken advantage of the time when Virginia's father was absent with the army, to carry his plans into execution; so when the pretended complaint was brought before his tribunal, he said that Virginia must remain with the person who claimed her as his bondmaid, until her friends could prove that his claim was unfounded. Now this sentence was unlawful, because all people had a right to their freedom, until it could be proved that they were slaves, so the people murmured against the unjust decree; and the tumult became still greater, when the maiden's lover and her uncle forced their way to the judgment seat, and demanded that she should be left at liberty until the arrival of her father. The Decemvir, fearing a popular disturbance, reluctantly consented to let her stay with her friends all the next day, saying that if her father did not then appear, she must be given up to the man who said he was her master; so the weeping girl left the Comitium, and returned home under the protection of her uncle and lover. Appius then despatched a secret message to one of the generals, desiring that he would not let Virginius leave the camp: but Icilius had already sent to the unhappy father, who was far on his way to Rome before the Decemvir's message had arrived.

Murmuring of the people.

Icilius and Virginius.

Early in the morning, Virginius led his daughter through the Forum, accompanied by many friends, and a number of matrons, whose interest was strongly excited. Appius took his seat, and, without the least regard to justice, declared that the maiden must be given up as a slave until proofs could be produced that she was free-born. The

people were disposed to attempt a rescue, but Appius had a band of armed Patricians ready to support nim, and cried out with a loud voice, "Lictor, make way for the man to take his slave." The wretched father, seeing that death alone could save his child from a worse fate, begged that he might bid her farewell; and approaching, he snatched a knife from a butcher's stall, and stabbed her to the heart. [14]This was the signal for a general insurrection. The soldiers joined the rest of the citizens, and the whole body established themselves on the sacred mount. Commissioners were sent by the senate to know their demands, which were: [15]that the tribuneship and right of appeal should be restored: that none should be held criminal for having taken a part in the insurrection; and that the Decemvirs should be given up to be burnt alive, the lawful punishment for high treason.[a] This last demand they were induced to forego, and to be satisfied with the abolition of the Decemvirate. [16]Two consuls were then elected; the people again had their tribunes, to whom they might appeal in cases of injustice, and several laws were passed for their future security. Appius and one of his colleagues were thrown into prison, where they died. The rest of the Decemvirs were suffered to go into exile, but their property was confiscated and sold by auction, as was customary in such cases.[b]

B.C. 448. Death of Virginia.

Quarrels between the Plebeians and Patricians.

B.C. 444. Five military tribunes chosen instead of consuls.

The Decemvirate abolished, and the consular goverment restored.

Appius and his colleagues.

The Commons were now in possession of more rights and privileges than they had ever been before; but they were not yet admitted into the senate, nor to other high offices of the state. One of the most important of these was the censorship, which arose out of the dissolution of the Decemvirate, as the business of the censors had been transacted by that body.

B.C. 443. The new office of Censor instituted.

[17]The original duties of the censors were to take a register of the citizens and their property, for the purpose

a Niebuhr. b Dr. Arnold.

of levying the taxes in due proportion; but the powers of these magistrates were gradually increased, till at length they exercised an almost despotic authority over the rights and property of all men.

Taking of the census.

[18]The census was taken in the field of Mars, where the censor, wearing a scarlet robe, was seated in the curule, or magisterial chair of state, surrounded by his clerks and subordinate officers. Every citizen was obliged to attend, to give an account of his property of every kind. He stated the name and situation of his landed estates; what proportion of it was arable, and what was meadow land; and how much was in vineyards and olive grounds. He also gave the number of his slaves, horses, and cattle, of which a valuation was made, and entered in the censor's books, with the amount of the tax to be paid.

[19]The senate left the regulation of the property tax entirely to the discretion of the censors, who were empowered not only to set what value they pleased upon a man's property, but to decide what parts of it should be subject to taxation, and how much the tax should be.

The Censors.

[20]The censors also determined to what class in society a man properly belonged; and as the rights of every citizen depended on his rank, this was a very important power. But the authority of these magistrates extended yet further; for they were authorized to punish people for moral offences which the law did not notice; as, for instance, if a man ill-treated his wife, were extravagant, or neglected the culture of his land, the censors would degrade him to a lower rank; and instances were known of Patricians being expelled from the senate for living in too expensive a manner; for at this period the simple habits of ancient times were beginning to give way to that taste for luxury which is sure to accompany the advance of civilization.

[21]The censors were entrusted with the management of

all the property from which the government revenues were derived. [22] The state domains were extensive, comprising vineyards, pastures, forests, mines, and fisheries. [23] These were let or farmed by the censors to certain individuals, who paid a fixed sum annually to the government, and took the chance of gaining or losing by the speculation. The harbours, too, were farmed in the same manner, and those to whom they were let, received the duties on foreign goods brought in ships to the Roman state. [24] Salt was a government monopoly, and the right of selling this useful article was let by the censors, who fixed the price at which it was to be sold. Appius Claudius exercised some of these powers while he was a Decemvir, so that he is sometimes called the first censor. There were two censors elected by the people, and the office was held at first for five years, but was soon afterwards shortened to the term of eighteen months.

The management of property.

The first Censor.

[25] Among the privileges gained at this period by the Plebeians, was the right of intermarriage with the Patrician houses, which had never before been permitted; and although such marriages had often taken place, in spite of the prohibition, they were not considered legal, and the children were not owned by their Patrician relatives, nor could they inherit the property of their parents. The removal of this restriction was therefore, a great point gained, because it naturally led to family connections between the two orders, and thus destroyed the great barrier that had hitherto kept them so distinct from each other. Still the haughty Patricians were very jealous of the growing power of the Commons, and would have been glad to have kept them from rising any higher, as was proved by many instances of violence.

Privileges gained by the Plebeians.

A case of this kind occurred [26] in the year of Rome 316, in a time of general calamity, occasioned by a scarcity of corn, the crops having failed for want of rain. The go-

B.C. 440. Famine at Rome.

vernment had obliged the farmers to deliver up all they had above the quantity necessary for a month's consumption in their families, and it was sold out of the magazines to the citizens, at a high price, and in small portions. The slaves were only allowed just enough to keep them from starving, and many poor people had been driven by extreme misery to throw themselves into the Tiber. [27] In the midst of this distress, a rich Plebeian knight, named Mælius, spent all his fortune[a] in buying up corn in Etruria, which he sold to the poor at a low price, while to those who had no money to buy, he gave it gratis. His bounty afforded some degree of relief, for a time at least, and of course made him extremely popular among the lower orders;[28] but it excited the ill-will of the rulers of the nation, who perhaps felt that they ought to have done as much for the people as this private individual; so that they contrived to make it appear that he had some design against the government, and had taken that means of gaining the favour of the multitude. A dictator was therefore appointed, who set up his tribunal in the Forum, and summoned Mælius to appear before him. This dictator was Cincinnatus, who was then eighty years of age. His hatred towards the Plebeians was well known; so Mælius, knowing that he would be condemned if he appeared before a judge who was predisposed against him, refused to obey the summons; and resisting the attempts that were made to drag him to the place where the dictator was sitting, he was killed in the scuffle.

The Plebeian Knight, Mælius.

B.C. 439. Cincinnatus Dictator.

Spurius Mælius put to death.

The death of Mælius occasioned a great disturbance, and to appease the people, some alteration was made in the form of government for the following year; the supreme authority being entrusted to three military tribunes, instead of two consuls. But it is needless to speak of every political change that occurred from this time to the invasion

a Niebuhr.

of the Gauls, which forms a new era in the history of Rome.

[29]The most important event that occurred during this period, was the conquest of the city of Veii, which was taken by the Romans in the year of Rome 359, after a war of ten years.

B.C. 405. The siege of Veii commenced.

[30]At the commencement of this war, it was decreed by the senate, that the soldiers should receive regular pay from the state; whereas, before that time, they had been obliged to serve at their own expense, and trust to being compensated by a share of the plunder. [31]The money to pay them was raised by a land-tax, amounting to a tenth of the value of the produce; and the Patricians were again obliged to contribute their portion, as they used to do in former times.

Legends respecting Veii.

There are some curious legends respecting the fall of Veii, which are very amusing to read, although they must not be regarded as historical facts. One of these stories tells us that, in the midst of summer, when the waters in many places were dried up, and the rivers low, the Alban lake suddenly began to rise without any visible cause, and overflowed the surrounding country. The news of this phenomenon reached Veii, and was much talked of there; and it was believed to be an omen connected with the fate of the city.

Rising of the Alban Lake.

Now, there was an old man at Veii, who was skilled in augury, and he was talking one day from the walls with a Roman whom he had known in days of peace. The Roman said he was sorry for the ruin that was coming on Veii, for the sake of this old man, his friend; but the old man laughed, and replied, "Ah, the Romans think to take Veii; but they will never enter its gates until the waters of Alba shall be discharged from the lake." The Roman told this saying in the camp, and it was agreed to entice the soothsayer out of the city, and send him to Rome, that

Wars with the Veientines, Volscians, and other states, during several years.

The Soothsayer.

he might be questioned by the senate as to the meaning of the omen. A plausible tale was invented, to induce him to venture outside the walls of the city, when he was secured and carried off to Rome. When taken before the senate, he confessed that the oracles of Veii declared, that while the lake continued to overflow, the city would not be taken; and that if the waters should reach the sea, Rome would be destroyed. In consequence of this prophecy, a tunnel was made through the hills that enclosed the lake, and its waters were drawn off into channels dug in the fields, and were thus prevented from flowing into the sea. This is the fabulous tale.

The fabulous tale.

[32] The truth is, that a tunnel was made about this time to draw off the waters of the lake, which had risen to an extraordinary height, owing, it is supposed, to the stoppage of some of its usual outlets, caused, probably by internal convulsions of the earth, or by the extreme severity of the preceding winter, when, it is recorded, the Tiber was choked with ice, and the snow seven feet deep on the ground.

[33] It is said, in the poetical legend of this war, that while the tunnel was being made to carry off the waters of the lake, the Roman general, Camillus, was preparing to capture Veii by means of a subterranean passage, which he employed the soldiers in digging, unknown to the Veientines, from the Roman camp into the very heart of the city. [34] This story, however, is extremely doubtful, and probably arose from a tradition that Veii was taken by means of a mine, by which part of the wall was thrown down.[a]

The plundering of the city.

Now, although the details may be incorrect, [35] there is no doubt that the rich city of Veii was taken and plundered about this time, and that its lands were subsequently divided among the whole of the Roman people. The houses, which were much handsomer than those at Rome,

a Niebuhr.

were given to the Patricians, for their former owners had mostly fallen at the storming the city, and those who escaped death, were sold for slaves.

The city taken by M. Furius Camillus, Dictator. B.C. 396.

[36] Camillus, who had won this great victory, and who was the greatest man of his time in his own country, was accused of having secreted some of the most valuable articles of the spoil for his own use; and he would have been outlawed, notwithstanding his services, had he not avoided the sentence by going into exile of his own accord. It is said that as he passed through the gates of Rome, he turned back and prayed that his ungrateful countrymen might soon have cause to regret him; a wish, which the legend adds, speedily became realised.

B.C. 391. Camillus exiled from Rome

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who was Icilius?
2 What law was made by him?
3 What were the provisions of the Icilian law?
4 How was property in houses held?
5 What change was made in the chief magistracy?
6 What is the meaning of Decemvirate?
7 Were the laws in writing?
8 How did the new laws affect the different classes of society?
9 What money was in use at this period?
10 What forms were observed in sales?
11 How was the second Decemvirate composed?
12 How did they abuse their power?
13 What particular instance of tyranny is related?
14 What followed the death of Virginia?
15 What were the demands of the people?
16 What was the result of the insurrection?
17 What was the Censorship?
18 How and where was the census taken?
19 How was the property tax regulated?
20 Was the power of the censors confined to taxation?
21 By whom were the government revenues managed?
22 From what source were these revenues derived?

Questions on the chapter.

23 How was this property made productive to t
24 What branch of trade was monopolised by t
ment?
25 What great privilege was gained by the Pleb
this time?
26 In what year did a severe famine occur in Rome?
27 How was relief afforded to the poor?
28 What was the fate of Mælius?
29 What was the next remarkable event?
30 What alteration was made with regard to the army?
31 How was the money raised to pay the soldiers?
32 What gave rise to the famous legend of the Alban lake?
33 What story is told of the taking of Veii?
34 What is supposed to have been the origin of this tale?
35 How were the lands and houses disposed of?
36 What happened to Camillus?

INVASIONS OF THE GAULS.

The Gauls.

[1]THE Gauls were the ancient inhabitants of France. They were an uncivilized, warlike people, whose armies consisted of countless hosts of undisciplined warriors, who depended for conquest on their great personal strength, and destructive mode of warfare. They had already crossed the Alps, and made great havoc among the Etruscans, whose power had long been declining; when [2]in the year of Rome 364, they first crossed the Apennines, and penetrated into southern Etruria, where they began to lay waste the country, and destroy the cities with fire and sword. These barbarians created terror by their fierce aspect, and the deafening noise of innumerable horns and trumpets. They used war chariots; but they were ill equipped for war, as very few of them wore armour, and their swords were of such bad metal, something of a mixture of brass and copper, that the first blow on an iron weapon or armour, often rendered them useless.[a] They

Equipment of the Gauls.

a Niebuhr.

carried long narrow shields, and wore a tartan plaid, with golden ornaments round their necks, arms, and ancles. Having passed the boundary of the Apennines, and finding themselves but feebly resisted, it is no wonder that the Gauls should march onward towards Rome, where the utmost alarm prevailed; as the city was totally unprepared for defence against so formidable a foe.

B.C. 390. The Gauls, having invaded Italy, defeated the Romans in the battle of Allia.

[3]All the men fit for service were hastily assembled, and sent out to meet the invaders. [4]A battle was fought on the banks of the Allia, a small stream, about eleven miles from Rome; where the Romans were defeated with great loss, and those who escaped death in the field retreated to Veii.

[5]On the news of this disastrous defeat, most of the inhabitants of Rome fled for refuge to the neighbouring cities, taking with them as much of their property as they could. Many objects of religious reverence were buried in the earth, and others carried away by the priests, and vestal virgins, who quitted their temples on the approach of the enemy.

The garrisoning of the Capitol.

[6]The Capitol was garrisoned with such citizens as were most able to defend it, and all the provisions in the city were collected, and sent in for their supply. [7]It is related and perhaps truly, that eighty priests and aged Patricians, of the highest rank, choosing rather to devote themselves to death than to outlive the republic, and the worship of the gods, put on their robes of ceremony, and sat down in the Forum, in their ivory chairs of state, to await the coming of the enemy. Some of these, who had held high offices in the magistracy, wore a white toga with a scarlet border; others, who had served as generals, and won triumphs, were arrayed in the triumphal toga, which was like a rich Indian shawl, embroidered with many colours.

[8]When the Gauls burst into the city, they found it silent and desolate. Every house was shut; not a human

being appeared in the streets; and when they came to the Forum, and saw the venerable priests and senators sitting in death-like stillness, they began to think the gods themselves had come down to save Rome. But this illusion soon vanished; for one of the Gauls went up to an aged priest, and stroked his white beard; on which, the indignant Roman struck him with his ivory sceptre. The barbarian instantly cut him down with his sword, and the rest of the self-devoted victims shared the same fate.

The sacrifice of the priests and Patricians.

[9] The Gauls then began to plunder the city. Every house was broken into, and much property that had been hastily concealed, was brought forth. This continued for several days; and when no more was to be found, the city was set on fire in different places; and, with the exception of a few houses on the Palatine hill, that were reserved for the abode of the chiefs, Rome was reduced to a heap of ashes. [10] It was then that most of the records of its history were destroyed; and hence arise the many doubts that are thrown upon all that is written concerning the times that preceded the invasion of the Gauls.

Plundering of the city.

Previous to the invasion of the Gauls.

[11] When the city was burned down, the invaders laid siege to the Capitol, in which there were above a thousand armed men. The Capitoline hill, which is now almost concealed by artificial slopes, and houses built up against it, was at that time a steep rocky cliff, [a] the summit of which was very difficult of access, except by one narrow path, which of course was guarded. The Gauls made several ineffectual attempts to storm the citadel; when, finding there was no chance of success, they blockaded the hill, in the hope of reducing it by famine; [12] but they soon began to suffer from the pestilential fever that seldom failed to make its appearance at Rome in the month of September, and was usually fatal to foreigners. It is said that thousands of the Gauls died of this disease; and the

Attempt to storm the citadel.

[a] Dr. Arnold.

place where their bodies were buried retained the name of the Gallic Piles, as long as ancient Rome existed. [a] Numbers of the barbarians abandoned the siege, and proceeded to the south of Italy; while those who remained, ravaged the whole country of Latium, to obtain provisions.

The refuge at Veii.

[13] In the meantime, the Romans, who had taken refuge at Veii, had recovered from their panic, and were anxious to open a communication with the garrison of the Capitol; so a young man, named Pontius Cominius, undertook the adventure. He swam down the Tiber, and climbed the cliff, into the Capitol, without being noticed by the enemy; and having explained the state of affairs at Veii, which encouraged the garrison to hope for speedy assistance, he returned in safety by the way he came.

In the morning, however, some Gauls noticed the traces of footsteps among the grass on the hill, which showed them that it was possible to ascend on that side; so they resolved when night came again, to make the experiment. One had already reached the summit, unnoticed by the sentinels, and many more were following, when some geese that were held sacred to Juno, and kept in the temple, began to scream and flap their wings, which caused a discovery; when the foremost of the intruders was pushed over the edge of the precipice by the tribune, Marcus Manlius, and in his fall bore down those who were mounting the hill.

Marcus Manlius.

The saving of the capitol.

[14] Thus the Capitol was saved, but the besieged had become much distressed for want of food; so they offered a large sum of money to the Gauls, to induce them to depart: and it was agreed that they should receive one thousand pounds weight of gold, for the ransom of the city and its territory.

[15] As the Romans had but little gold at that period, they were obliged to take the treasures from the temple,

[a] Niebuhr

and the women gave up their jewels, to satisfy the Gauls, whose[16] avarice, it seems, led them to bring false weights to weigh it with, that they might get more than they were entitled to.

[17] It is stated, that one of the consuls complained of this fraud, on which Brennus, the barbarian chief, threw his sword into the scale, exclaiming, "Woe to the vanquished!" But the woe was to himself, according to the legend, which tells us that, just at this moment, Camillus, whose return had been solicited by his repentant countrymen, entered the Forum at the head of an army he had brought from Veii, and ordered that the gold should be taken back to the Capitol, for he had been appointed dictator, and had a right to command and to be obeyed. It is added, that a battle ensued in consequence; that the Gauls suffered a total defeat, and were driven from Rome without the treasure. Tradition also relates, that they were defeated a second time on their way, when all the booty they were carrying off was taken from them, and their chief made prisoner.

Defeat of the Gauls.

Rome taken and plundered by the Gauls, but rebuilt.

But these are mere fables, derived most likely from some poetical legend, wherein the great deeds of Camillus are related with much exaggeration. [18] It is more probable that the Gauls went away with the gold they had obtained from the Romans; and that Camillus was recalled, with many other exiles, to supply the places of the citizens who had perished during the destructive invasion.[a] He attained high honours after his return, and perhaps he drove those left of the Gauls out of Italy, for they had settled themselves in various parts; and thus might arise the popular tale of his driving the Gauls from Rome.[b]

Rebuilding of the city.

The city had now to be rebuilt; which was no easy task for a people so impoverished as the Romans were by the late invasion. Many thought it would be better to leave

a Niebuhr. b Dr. Arnold.

the ruins of Rome, and go altogether to Veii, which was ready built, and quite large enough to contain all that remained of the Roman people.

Most of the Patricians, however, were resolutely opposed to this plan, which would, in all probability, have put an end for ever to the Roman state. Every encouragement was, therefore, given to the people to assist in restoring the city; while, to prevent the possibility of settling at Veii, the houses there were pulled down to furnish bricks and roofing materials for re-building the houses at Rome. [19] These were given by the senate to the people, who were allowed to hew stone and cut wood wherever they could find it, on condition of giving security to finish their houses within a year. Then every man might erect his habitation on any spot, and in what manner he chose; and thus a mass of buildings arose, poor in appearance, ill constructed, and without the least attempt at order. But however mean and wretched the new city might be, the two grand points were gained, of preserving its site and name, which being done, time alone was wanting to improve the work.

The new city

[20] The matrons, who had afforded assistance to the state, by giving up their jewels towards paying the ransom to the Gauls, were rewarded by a decree that women, as well as men, should have orations spoken in their praise at their funerals, which was esteemed a great honour. They had already obtained the privilege of riding through the city in chariots, for similar conduct on a former occasion; a mark of distinction that had, in earlier times, been confined to magistrates of the highest order.

Reward of the matrons.

It was many years before the Romans recovered from the effects of the Gallic invasion. [21] The Plebeians were in a miserable condition, for they had lost all their cattle, fruit trees and farming implements; and besides having their houses to re-build, and their land to plant afresh,

taxes were very soon imposed on them to fortify the Capitoline hill, and to furnish means for carrying on wars with the neighbouring states, that had taken advantage of the misfortunes of the Romans, to attack them on every side; while many of the subject towns declared themselves independent, and those which had been allies, became enemies. Camillus was, at this period, the great ruler of Rome, and the leader of its armies; and he continued to hold the first place in the state until his death, which was caused by a pestilence in the year of Rome 390, being twenty-five years from the invasion of the Gauls.

The contraction of debts.

In the meanwhile, the poverty of the Plebeians had led to a renewal of the miseries they had suffered in the time of Spurius Cassius.[22] Debts were contracted, and again numbers of unfortunate debtors were consigned to dungeons and slavery. Most of the heavy brass coin had been lost in the plunder of the city, for the people in their hasty flight had not been able to remove such cumbrous treasure; but many foreign money lenders now came to Rome, allured by the prospect of getting great interest for their capital; and from these, as well as from wealthy Patricians, who, from various circumstances, had been able to preserve their property, the needy were obliged to borrow.[a]

Season of general distress.

[23] In this season of general distress, Marcus Manlius, the brave commander, who had saved the Capitol by pushing down the Gauls who were scaling the hill, took pity on the condition of the insolvent debtors, and sold one of his own private estates, for the express purpose of relieving as many of them as he could. His generosity, however, met with no better a reward than the benevolence of the good knight Mælius, who spent his fortune in buying corn for the starving people. [24] Manlius was accused of sedition, and thrown into prison. [25] The people went into mourning

a Niebuhr.

for him, and crowds were assembled round his prison doors every day and night; so that the senate thought it best to release him, to avoid an insurrection. [26]The treatment he had experienced, however, made him an inveterate enemy of the government; and this disposition, together with his extreme popularity, caused him to be regarded as a dangerous person. He was again charged with treason, and condemned to death; but, ere the sentence was pronounced, he had seized on the Capitol, aided by a great number of partisans, where he intended to defend himself against the government. [27]But his death was accomplished by the following stratagem: a slave, pretending to be the bearer of a message from some of his friends, was admitted to a conference, on the hill; and as Manlius did not suspect any treachery, he incautiously walked on the edge of a precipice, when the traitor suddenly pushed him over, and he was killed.

Manlius again charged with treason.

B.C. 385. Death of Marcus Manlius.

The distresses of the people were now greater than ever, and they saw no other prospect before them than the sad one of the whole of the Commons becoming the slaves of the nobles. If this had happened, the Romans would, most probably, never have been so great a people as they were in after times; but their freedom was preserved by the exertions of two excellent and talented men, [28]Licinius, and Sextius, who were made tribunes about this time. Licinius was a wealthy Plebeian, whose ancestors had borne honourable appointments, and who had inherited a large landed property from his father.

Licinius and Sextius.

It is mentioned, as a proof of the greatness to which this family had attained, that they had ancestral images, which at that time was a very uncommon thing in Plebeian houses. [29]These images were waxen busts of all the individuals who, by their great deeds, had done honour to their race. Every family of distinction had such images of those among their ancestors who had won triumphs, or

Ancestral images.

held great offices of state. They were kept in cases along the sides of the court of the house, and being painted to look like life, were worn at funerals, like masks, by some of the dependents of the family, who were also dressed in the official robes of the persons they represented; so that the deceased seemed to be followed by all the most distinguished members of his house, who had lived in ages past. Such a pageant, on so melancholy an occasion, is revolting to our feelings, yet it was suited to the ideas and habits of a heathen nation. But let us return to the affairs of the people.

B.C. 376. No magistrates, except Tribunes of the people, elected for five years.

The new tribunes were resolved to better their condition by effecting a reform in the constitution, not by violence, but by perseverance; and to this end they proposed new laws, which at length, after a hard contest with the Patricians, for five years, they succeeded in getting passed. [30] One of them was an Agrarian law, by which every Roman citizen was entitled to a share of newly-acquired lands. There were many provisions in this law respecting the landed possessions of all classes, as well as of the public lands, and all made with a view to secure to every man the means of subsistence, and of paying his share of the public expenses, without involving himself in debt.

Roman Plebeians.

We must always bear in mind that [31] the Roman Plebeians could not support themselves by keeping shops or working at trades; for they were still prohibited by law from doing so. They depended entirely on agriculture; and hence it was necessary to their existence that every man should have his little farm. It was, therefore, a very bad thing for rich men to hold large landed estates, because they thus took up too much of the land, and did not leave enough for every Plebeian to have even a small piece of ground, to grow herbs and roots. To remedy this evil, [32] it was by the new Agrarian law enacted, that no person, however high his rank, should possess more than five

The new Agrarian law.

hundred juger of the domain, nor send more than one hundred head of cattle, and five hundred sheep or goats, to graze on the commons. Those who occupied the public land, were to pay the tithe from it, that the poor might be less burdened with taxes; and they were also to employ freemen as labourers. They had been in the habit of employing slaves and debtors, the latter being always compelled to work in chains.

[33] The other laws of Licinius were, that one of the Consuls should always be a Plebeian; and that those who were in slavery, or pledged for debt, should be released from the obligation of paying interest for the money they owed, and should be allowed three years to repay the original sum they had borrowed.

The Patricians.

The Patricians were very unwilling to agree to these measures; and, for five years, held out against them; but they were obliged in the end to yield, and the Licinian laws, as they were called, were passed in the year of Rome, 383.

Conduct of the nobles.

[34] It may appear strange that the nobles should have consented to laws that were so obnoxious to them; but they had lost their Latin allies, who, formerly, might have been called in to assist them, in case of a civil war with the Plebeians; and the latter were not, as in some countries, to be held in check by the military force of the state, because they constituted themselves the larger portion of the army.

[35] The aged Camillus had been made Dictator, in [36] the hope that he would have been able to prevent the election of such tribunes as would exert themselves in favour of the Licinian laws; but the times were so changed, that this once-dreaded magistrate was no longer able to exercise absolute power; and Camillus was threatened by the tribunes with a heavy fine, if he should persist in interfering with the elections.

B.C. 366. A Plebeian first appointed one of the Consuls.

[37]The first Plebeian Consul was Sextius, the colleague of Licinius. A few Plebeians had also obtained seats in the senate; and thus the Commons of Rome were at length placed upon an equality with the higher class, as far as regarded their political rights.

The Patricians were by no means reconciled to the new order of things, but made several attempts to set aside the Licinian laws, and regain the privilege of having both Consuls chosen from their own order. Now and then they were successful in this respect; but the [38]number of Plebeian senators was constantly increasing; they were admitted to the censorship, and other high offices of the state; and, in the course of time, an equality of rights among Roman citizens of either order was fully established, and a foundation thus laid for a powerful and extensive empire.

The plague.

About seven years after the passing of the new laws, Rome was again visited by the plague, and among the numbers who fell a sacrifice to this dreadful scourge, was

B.C. 365. Death of Camillus.

the venerable Camillus.[39] The Romans believed that the plague was a sign that the gods were angry; so to appease their wrath, they celebrated a festival called Lectisternium, at which the images of the gods were placed in public, reclining on couches, with tables before them covered with choice viands, as if they were being entertained with a feast. On this occasion, plays were performed at Rome, on temporary wooden stages, the actors being brought from Etruria.[a]

B.C. 362. Story of Marcus Curtius.

[40]The famous legend of Marcus Curtius belongs to this period. This legend tells how a wide gulf opened in the Forum, which, the oracles declared, would not close until it had received the most valuable gift that Rome could bestow. Then a noble youth, named Marcus Curtius, came forward, armed and mounted, saying that nothing was

a Keightley.

more valuable than arms and courage, and plunging into the abyss, it closed upon him. It need scarcely be said that this is a fable; but it is too remarkable to be omitted.

B.C. 360. War with the Gauls.

41 The Romans were, at this period, engaged in a variety of wars. Their armies were constantly in the field against the Gauls, the Hernicians, or the Etruscans; but as the relation of wars, that lead to no particular result, is extremely uninteresting, the chief object in speaking of them at all, is to show that the Romans were seldom at peace.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the Chapter.

1 Who were the Gauls?
2 When did they first invade Rome?
3 How did the Romans act on the news of this invasion?
4 What was the result?
5 How was the news received at Rome?
6 What measures were taken for defence?
7 What remarkable instance of self-sacrifice took place on this occasion?
8 Relate the catastrophe.
9 What happened after the massacre?
10 How did these events affect the early history of Rome?
11 How did the Gauls proceed after the destruction of the city?
12 What calamities befel them?
13 How was the Capitol endangered and saved?
14 What terms were made with the Gauls?
15 How did the Romans obtain gold for the ransom?
16 Did not the Gauls act unfairly?
17 What story is told of this transaction?
18 What is supposed to be the true version of the tale?
19 How was the city rebuilt?
20 How were the matrons rewarded for their assistance?
21 What was the condition of the Plebeians after the Gallic invasion?
22 What was the consequence of these misfortunes?
23 By whom and how were their distresses relieved?
24 How was Manlius treated by the senate?
25 Why was he released?

Questions on the Chapter.

26 What followed?
27 How was his death accomplished?
28 Who then came forward as friends of the people?
29 What were ancestral images?
30 What was an Agrarian law?
31 Why was it necessary for every Plebeian to be a landholder?
32 What were the provisions of the new law?
33 What other laws were made by Licinius?
34 Why were the nobles obliged to pass these laws?
35 Who was made dictator about this time?
36 What was the object of his appointment?
37 Who was the first Plebeian consul?
38 What were the beneficial effects of the Licinian laws?
39 What was a Lectisternium?
40 What famous legend relates to this period?
41 With whom were the Romans at war at this period?

THE SAMNITE WARS.

The Samnites.

[1]THE Samnites were at this time a great people in Italy: they were chiefly of Sabine origin, but were mixed with other tribes; so that their country, which was called Samnium, consisted of several independent confederate states.

[2]A body of Samnites had, about seventy years before the death of Camillus, established themselves in the city of Capua, where they became the ruling order; and, gradually losing the rude habits of mountaineers, grew into a refined and luxurious people. [3]The country around them, now part of the kingdom of Naples, was called Campania, and its chief city, Capua, was superior to Rome in wealth and in the style of its buildings. The Campanians, as the citizens of Capua were called, were more polished than the Romans. They were acquainted with Grecian arts and literature; and one of their favourite amusements was the performance of burlesque comedies, from which is derived

The Campanians.

the merry exhibition, familiar to us all, of Pulcinello, or Punch.[a]

[4]There were other populous cities in Campania, and among them Herculaneum and Pompeii.[b]

[5]It happened that the warlike Samnites of the mountain districts, came down into the plains, plundered the lands, and defeated the Campanians, who shut themselves up in Capua, and sent for aid to the Romans, who entered into an alliance with them; and having declared war against the Samnites, sent their armies into Campania, under the command of the [6]consul Valerius, one of the first generals of the age, who gained a great victory over the Samnites, for which he was awarded a triumph on his return to Rome. The Samnites, however, rallied their forces, and took the field again in the following year.

B.C. 343. First war with the Samnites.

In the meantime, the new laws had not afforded that speedy relief to the Commons of Rome which they had anticipated, and the Patricians were still using every effort to set aside those laws.[7] Discontented, therefore, with the state of things at Rome, and seeing the luxury that abounded in the city of Capua, where they were quartered, the whole army revolted and marched towards Rome, releasing in their way all debtors whom they found working as bondmen in the fields. On hearing of this revolt, all the Plebeians in the city rose also; while the Patricians, with their clients, hastily formed an army of themselves, and set forth to meet the insurgents. It seems, however, that both parties were unwilling to come to an engagement with their fellow citizens;[8] so the Patricians consented to grant the demands of the soldiers, which were, that none should be punished for the insurrection; that no man's name should be struck off the army list, without his own consent; that no magistrate should be re-elected to the same office, till after an interval of ten years; and, what

The new laws and the Commons.

a Niebuhr. *b* Dr. Arnold.

was more important, that all existing debts should be cancelled by an act of grace, and those who were in bondage for debt set free.

B.C. 340. War with the Latins.

[9]About this time the Romans quarrelled with the Latins, who desired to form a union with them on equal terms; but the Romans, who always wanted to have the superiority in their alliances, would not agree to this proposal; so war was declared, to decide which nation should rule over the other. [10]The Romans, therefore, made peace with the Samnites, who joined them as allies; while the Campanians, being thus deserted, took the part of the Latins, who made Campania the scene of strife. This war is remarkable for two incidents that display, in a striking manner, the sternness and the enthusiasm of the Roman character. [11]Orders had been given that none of the Romans should engage in single combat with the enemy; but this command was disobeyed by a young Patrician, the son of Manlius, the Consul, who being insulted and challenged by one of the generals of the foe, fought with and slew him. His father instantly condemned him to death, and the sentence, as stated by some writers, was executed; but according to Plutarch, he was rescued by the soldiers, who would not suffer the sentence to take place; but Manlius was ever afterwards regarded with horror by all the soldiers, as the murderer of his son, to whom they had been much attached, on account of his affable manners and undaunted courage. The young Patricians, too, showed their detestation of the act, by refusing to attend the triumph of the Consul.

Single combat.

The Consul Manlius, said to have put his own son to death for disobedience to his command.

[12]The other extraordinary event was, the sacrifice of the Roman General Decius, who, to fulfil an oracle, which had declared that the party would conquer whose general should devote himself to death in the cause, rode into the ranks of the enemy, and fell covered with wounds. [13]This battle, which took place at the foot of Mount Vesuvius,

was that which decided the war in favour of the Romans; for although some few towns held out for some time longer, it was with no prospect of success. [14]The conquest of Latium was completed in the year 412, and Roman garrisons were placed in all the towns. Some of the public land was divided into small lots and given to poor Plebeians; but the larger portion was reserved as domain land by the state.

Dissolution of the confederacy of the Latins.

[15]The confederacy of the Latins was thus dissolved; they became subjects of Rome, and many of them were admitted to the rights of Roman citizenship; but they were no longer a free people; and that they might never regain their independence, care was taken to estrange the cities from each other, by prohibiting intermarriages, and making a law that no person should purchase land in any other district but that of his own city. [16]The Campanians had also submitted to the Romans, and surrendered their city of Capua, soon after the great battle near Vesuvius.

Wars of the Romans.

[17]It was about this time that the Grecian king, Alexander the Great, began his brilliant military career; and during the next twelve years, the world was occupied with the conquests of that mighty hero while the Romans were engaged in wars of little importance, in different parts of Italy.[18] Alexander subjected the people of Sidon, the principal port of the Phœnicians, who were the great traders of ancient times; and the founders of Carthage, as well as of other commercial cities along the shores of the Mediterranean sea.

The Phœnicians.

The Phœnicians, who were the same people that are called in the bible Canaanites, were manufacturers as well as merchants, and excelled in making fine linen, tapestry, metal goods, and glass; which they sent to almost every part of the then known world, even as far as the British Islands. They had good ships, built of cedar wood, which

they obtained in abundance from the mountains of Lebanon.[a]

[19] Another of their great cities was Tyre, celebrated for the beautiful purple dye, known by the name of Tyrian purple. This city was also conquered by Alexander, and many of its rich merchants and manufacturers went to Carthage, to settle among their brethren of that colony; so that its wealth and importance were greatly increased by the fall of Tyre, a circumstance that ought to be remembered, as we shall presently come to the famous Punic wars between Rome and Carthage.

Colonies established by the Romans.

The colonies, or garrisons, established by the Romans in the cities of Latium, formed a protective force against the Samnites, and were rendered still more effective by the number of fortresses in that part of the country, where there was scarcely a hill that had not a castle standing on its summit.

[20] The Samnites, however, had formed an alliance with some Greek cities, on the coast of Italy, one of which was Neapolis, now Naples, the inhabitants of which were called Neapolitans, as they are still. In conjunction with these allies they committed acts of hostility against the Roman colonists in Campania, which caused a renewal of the war.

B.C. 326. Second Samnite war began.

[21] This second Samnite war lasted twenty years, during which, fortune sometimes favoured one side, then the other. On one occasion, the Roman legions would have been utterly destroyed, but for the magnanimity of [22] the Samnite general, Pontius, who nobly refrained from taking full advantage of an accident that had placed them in his power.

The pass of Caudium.

[23] The Romans, under the command of the two consuls, had entered the pass of Caudium, a narrow passage cut through the Apennines, which is now called the valley of Arpaia, and is the present road from Naples to Benevento. This valley had but a narrow outlet, which the

a Annals of Commerce.

Samnites had blocked up with pieces of rock and trunks of trees, so that the Romans were caught, as it were, in a trap; for on turning to retreat, they saw the hills covered with soldiers. They made a desperate attempt to liberate themselves, but without success. Death seemed inevitable; for if they persevered in retracing their steps, they were sure to be cut to pieces; and if they remained, they must perish with hunger. In this extremity, deputies were sent to the Samnite general, to ask on what terms they would be permitted to retreat; when Pontius returned for answer, that he required a renewal of the ancient alliance between Rome and Samnium, and the restoration of all places that the Romans had taken from the Samnites. Their arms and baggage were to be given up, and six hundred knights left as hostages for the performance of the treaty. On these conditions, the Romans, headed by their consuls, marched out of the valley, under a yoke formed by a pole laid across the narrow outlet. This was a common usage in those days, and was merely a sign that those who went under it acknowledged they were vanquished. The noble Pontius gave orders that they should be furnished with carts,[a] to convey the sick and wounded, and with provisions for the whole march to Rome.

B.C. 321. Surrender of a Roman army, at the defile of Caudium.

Pontius.

This defeat was the greatest humiliation the Romans had ever suffered. They were ashamed to enter the Capital, so the army was disbanded near the gates; and those who lived in the country went quietly to their homes, while those who lived in the city waited till night, ere they ventured to go through the streets to their houses. The unfortunate consuls resigned their office, and new ones were appointed.

[24]The senate refused to ratify the peace, although most of the senators had a son or some dear relative among the hostages. The two consuls, and all who had held com-

The senate and the two consuls.

a Dr. Arnold calls them carriages.

mand in the disgraced army, were sent, bound with cords, to Pontius, who was not only general, but sovereign of the Samnites. [25]This great prince said that the Romans had acted unworthily, in not fulfilling the conditions on which he had liberated their armies, when he might have destroyed them; but he released the consuls, with their companions and sent them back; and there is every reason to believe that he also gave liberty to the hostages; or if they were not set free then, that they were allowed to be ransomed by their friends.[a]

One would hardly suppose that the Romans could have treated with base ingratitude a man who had behaved so nobly towards them; yet this was the case, as will be seen hereafter.

General mourning.

In consequence of the disastrous events that had taken place, a general mourning was observed at Rome for a whole year. No festivals were held, nor any marriages celebrated. The war was renewed, and continued for fifteen years after the defeat at Caudium, when [26]the Samnites were obliged to give up the contest, and acknowledge the supremacy of Rome.

Appearance of the Samnites.

In the last great battle, the Samnites are described as making a very imposing appearance, by the splendour of the armour displayed by those battalions that were formed of the most wealthy classes. Some wore tunics of purple, others of white linen. Their shields of brass were inlaid with gold and silver ornaments, and their brazen helmets were surmounted by crests. These adornments were taken as spoils by the Romans, and the shields were carried in the triumphal procession of the Dictator, Papirius Cursor, who had the chief command in the battle. Some of them were afterwards given to the Campanians, who armed their gladiators with them; for shows of gladiators were exhibited at Capua before they were known at Rome.[b] The

B.C. 319. War renewed, and the Samnites defeated by the Dictator Papirius Cursor.

a Niebuhr. b Niebuhr.

rest of the glittering shields were distributed among the goldsmiths in the Forum, to be hung out during the great festivals, when it was customary to decorate the Forum as a part of the pageant. The shops around it were open in front, with a row of square massive piers before them, which formed an arcade, and supported the upper stories of the houses, as is the case in many of the towns in Italy at the present day; and the Samnite shields were hung up outside the piers on all great occasions.

Habits of the higher classes

The shops of the goldsmiths had lately superseded those of a less gay appearance, on the north side of the Forum; but on the opposite side, the butchers' stalls and cooks' shops still remained; and it is mentioned as a proof of the luxurious habits of the higher class of citizens at this period, that they were in the habit of sending for cooks from the Forum to dress dinners for their friends; as they had no slaves who understood the art of cookery properly.[a]

Streets and buildings.

About this time, Rome was beginning to be embellished with good streets, fine stone buildings, bronze statues, and other works of art. It was at this period, too, that the custom of giving palm branches to the victors in the public games, was introduced from Greece.[b]

The power and territory of the Romans had greatly increased during the twenty years of the Samnite war. [27] All the country around Mount Vesuvius had fallen under their dominion, with a great many cities which had belonged to the Samnites, and other nations that had taken a part in the war.

Personal slavery for debt abolished.

[28] It was during this period, but in what year is not certain, that the old law of personal slavery for debt was abolished. By the new law, the property of a debtor might be seized, and he could be confined in a public prison, in which case he was struck off the list of his tribe,

a Dr. Arnold. b Niebuhr.

and lost all his political rights as a Roman citizen; but he could not be made a slave.

Among the great men who flourished at Rome, at this time, was [29]Appius Claudius, commonly called Appius the Blind, because he had the misfortune to lose his sight in his old age. About the middle of the Samnite war, he had been appointed censor; and as, from some particular circumstances, it happened that he had no colleague in that office, he resolved to distinguish himself, by executing some great works that might immortalize his name.

B.C. 312. Great road from Rome to Capua, called the "Appian Way," constructed.

It has already been stated, that the censors had the management of all property belonging to the state; so [30]Appius applied vast sums to the purposes of constructing a military road from Rome to Capua, a distance equal to 120 English miles, and of bringing a constant supply of good water into the Capital, from springs about eight miles distant, partly by pipes underground, and partly by an aqueduct of arches under the Cœlian and Aventine hills. The road was called the Appian Way. It was paved with lava, a substance that is thrown out from the volcanoes in a liquid state, but hardens into a durable and excellent material for making roads.

The Appian Way.

The Appian Way was equal to the greatest works of modern engineers; for some parts of it were cut through steep hills, while others were carried through valleys, and raised to a level with the rest, by massive substructions of stonework.

A great many of the labourers employed on these vast undertakings, were prisoners, taken in the Samnite wars; but many also were hired workmen, who lived at Rome; and it may here again be observed, that the lower orders in the city, who practised trades, were quite a distinct class from the Plebeians. They were united into guilds or corporations, each of which had its peculiar privileges but they were the mob of Rome, and no more equal to the

Guilds or corporations.

Plebeian commons, than the latter were in former days to the Patricians.

The most respectable of the societies, was that of the notaries, who were the writers employed in all public business. Each of the magistrates had a number of clerks to keep the records of all transactions connected with his office, and the notaries were also frequently employed as private secretaries, and were usually well paid. Still they were not upon an equality with the Plebeian landholders, for they were not freemen; they did not belong to the armies; nor had they any of the rights of free citizens.[a] It happened, however, that one [31]Flavius, the chief of the notaries, who was a clerk in the office of Appius the censor, [32]made himself popular among the Plebeians by making an almanac expressly for their convenience, shewing all the days in each month that law business might be transacted in the city.

Flavius the chief notary.

In former times, the market-days were those on which causes were tried, complaints laid before the magistrates, taxes paid, &c.; a regulation that suited the country farmers extremely well, because they were often in town on those days, and could then take the opportunity of settling all such concerns; but this had been altered, and different days and hours fixed for law transactions of different kinds, so that every time a man had any business to settle connected with the law, he was obliged first to go to town to know when it might be done, and then to make a second journey to do it; which caused a great deal of trouble and expense. To remedy this inconvenience, Flavius composed his calender, which stated what kind of business might be done on each day, and at what hours; and this being painted on a tablet, and hung up in the Forum, every one could see it when he came to market.

Market days.

For this good deed, Flavius was elected to one of the

a Niebuhr.

subordinate magistracies; the first time such an office had been conferred on one of his class.

B.C. 298. Third Samnite war commenced.

[33] It was not long before the peace with the Samnites was broken, and a new war commenced, in which they were assisted by the Etruscans and the Gauls, the latter of whom served for pay in their armies. Their country was now ravaged from one extremity to the other, and many battles were fought, in which the Romans generally gained the advantage.

Pontius made prisoner.

[34] At length, after about six years of incessant warfare, the Samnites were finally defeated by the consul Fabius, when Pontius, the noble chief of the Samnites, was made prisoner.

Pontius beheaded.

[35] The conduct of the Romans on this occasion, was certainly unworthy of a great people. The captive hero was led in chains in the triumphal procession of the victor, and on arriving at the foot of the Capitoline hill, was separated with other prisoners of rank, from the gorgeous train, and taken to a dungeon, where he and his companions in misfortune were beheaded; an ungrateful return for the magnanimity with which he had treated the vanquished Roman army thirty years before.

The consul Fabius, who had gained this decisive victory over the Samnites, was a member of the celebrated family of that name. His father, now far advanced in years, was the greatest general of the age, and had filled with honour the highest offices of the state. He was present at the battle, but he chose to give all the glory of the victory to his son, so he rode on horseback behind the car in the triumph.

The next remarkable event in the history of Rome, is the invasion of a Greek prince, Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, one of the most renowned warriors of the age; as brave and ambitious, though not so successful, as Alexander the

[a] Niebuhr.

Great, whose glorious career had been terminated by death about seven years before Pyrrhus was born.

B.C. 281. War with the Tarentines and with Pyrrhus, king of Epirus.

[36] It happened that the Romans, who were generally at war with several nations at the same time, had quarrelled with the people of Tarentum, a Greek city in the south of Italy, now called Taranto, and seated on the borders of the gulf of that name. Tarentum was a rich handsome town, inhabited by a mixed population of Greeks and Italians. The chief sources of its wealth were the manufacture of woollen cloth, and dyeing; besides which, the Tarentines had extensive fisheries, and fine salt-works, from which they supplied the inland districts; and their merchants carried on an extensive trade by sea, with many cities on the shores of the Mediterranean. [37] But they were not a warlike people, so they were obliged always to call in foreign aid against their enemies; and when the Romans declared war against them, the chief magistrates assembled a council of all the leading men, to consult as to what was best to be done, when it was resolved to send for assistance to the king of Epirus.

Trade by sea.

The king of Epirus.

Some of the citizens objected to this measure, because they thought that the ambition of the Greek prince might lead him to usurp the sovereignty of Tarentum, if he should once gain a footing there. One person, a man of rank, came into the theatre where the assembly was held, crowned with a garland of flowers, and accompanied by a flute player, who began to play a merry tune. The people laughed, and called out that he had better dance to the music, "That is what I am going to do," said he; "we may as well enjoy ourselves while we can, for there will be no more dancing and feasting when Pyrrhus comes."

Deputation to Pyrrhus.

The majority, however, held a different opinion; and a deputation was sent to Pyrrhus, who was pleased with the enterprise, and speedily embarked with a large army; but most of his ships being lost in a storm, he arrived at

Tarentum with only a small force. [38] He, therefore, saw it would be necessary, that every man should give all the aid he could; so he took upon himself the office of Dictator; and, having quartered his troops in the town, he gave orders that all amusements, both public and private, should be suspended; and all citizens capable of bearing arms enrolled among the soldiers, and kept on duty all day in the market-place, or on the walls. The theatre, and public walks were closed, and the young men obliged to practise warlike exercise, instead of gymnastic sports.

Unexpected regulations.

These unexpected regulations spread terror and dismay among the citizens; and many would have fled, but the king placed guards at the gates, so that no one should leave the city. In the meantime, a Roman army was marching southward, under the command of the consul Lævinus, who was met by Pyrrhus near Heraclea, a city on the gulf of Tarentum. [39] Here the Romans were defeated with great loss; a misfortune, that was, perhaps, owing to the elephants, which the Greeks employed in their armies; for the Romans had never seen any of these huge animals before, and were quite unprepared to encounter them. Elephants, for war, had been introduced into Greece from India, in consequence of the invasion of that country by Alexander the Great.

Defeat of the Romans.

After this victory, all the states of southern Italy joined the conqueror, who, however, did not wish to continue the war, provided he could make an advantageous peace. [40] He therefore sent ambassadors to Rome, with proposals to the following effect:—That the independence of all the Greek cities in Italy, should be acknowledged: and all places which had been taken from the Samnites, restored; and on these conditions he offered to release all the prisoners taken at the battle of Heraclea, without ransom. The Romans were at this time engaged in a war with the Etruscans, so that the senate would perhaps have acceded to these terms, that

War with the Etruscans.

they might send all their forces into Etruria; but[41] while the question was in debate, Appius Claudius, the Blind, who was then in extreme old age, was carried in a litter to the senate house, where he was met by his sons, who led him in, and seated him in the chair he used to occupy in former days; for he had long ceased to take part in public affairs. The most profound silence was observed while he addressed the assembly, representing the probable consequences of giving up territories that had been won by many a hard fought battle, and establishing a rival power in Italy before which they might themselves eventually be forced to bend.

Fabricius and Pyrrhus.

The arguments of the aged orator prevailed, and it was resolved to continue the war. The consul Fabricius was then sent to Pyrrhus, to negotiate for the ransom of the prisoners; but Pyrrhus refused to set them at liberty, although he generously allowed them to go to Rome to celebrate a festival, on their promise to return if peace should not be concluded; and as they could not persuade the senate to make peace, they were all obliged to return into captivity; for a decree was passed, that if any one should break his word, and remain behind, he should be put to death.

Renewal of the war.

[42] The war was renewed, and went on for some time without any prospect of being brought to a close; but the army of Pyrrhus was decreasing, and he began to suspect the fidelity of some of his allies; besides which, he had another enterprise in view, as the people of Sicily were desirous of his aid in delivering that island from the dominion of the Carthaginians, who had invaded it. Under these circumstances the king made peace with the Romans, set all the prisoners free, and quitted Italy, leaving a governor with some troops in Tarentum to keep possession. [43] The Romans now pursued the war in the south of Italy with unvaried success, taking city after city, and receiving the submission of the people.

Progress of the war.

At length, Pyrrhus, who had failed in obtaining possession of Sicily, was entreated to return to defend Tarentum, and he did so; but being defeated in a decisive battle, he again left the country, and was subsequently killed in some new enterprise. [44]Soon after the departure of Pyrrhus, Tarentum was taken by the Romans, who destroyed the walls, took away its arms and vessels, and carried off all the beautiful statues and paintings to embellish Rome. A garrison was placed in the citadel, and the inhabitants forced topay an annual tribute.

The Bruttians.

Among the nations that submitted to the Romans at this period, were the Bruttians, a people of Greek origin, inhabiting that part of Italy called Calabria, who ceded to the state the half of a large forest district called Sila; a tract rich to this day in all the varieties of timber trees, and famous for the best pitch known to the ancients. The right of preparing the pitch was let by the Censors, and brought to the republic a considerable revenue.[a]

B.C. 266. All Italy submitted to the Romans.

We need not enter into the horrible details of the Italian wars that went on for ten years after the retreat of Pyrrhus, at the end of which period,[45] the Romans were acknowledged masters of nearly the whole of Italy, and almost every town contained a Roman garrison. [46]The conquered nations were in general left in possession of their own laws, and at liberty to choose their own magistrates. They were called allies. A part of their lands was restored to them in full property; that is, they paid no land tax to the Roman government, but they were obliged to furnish a certain number of soldiers to the state, and to clothe and pay them; which came to the same thing as paying tribute for their land, as the land tax was imposed expressly for the expenses of war. [47]The Romans, however, gained by these conquests new territories, with forests, mines, and harbours, from which large revenues were derived, that

Roman gains by conquest.

a Dr. Arnold.

enriched the state, and consquently the people. Numbers of poor men, not only Romans, but their allies also, obtained grants of land, and all were allowed to share equally in the use of the domain lands,[a] some of which were set apart for common pasture, and the rest occupied by the rich citizens, as already explained, who were obliged to employ free labourers to cultivate them. The increase of the revenues gave rise to more offices under government; and the hope of obtaining such places induced young men to study the law with much diligence.

Silver coin first used at Rome.

[48]The first silver coinage of the Romans was issued during the Samnite wars; but it is not known whether private individuals had the right of coining, or whether it was the exclusive privilege of the government. In consequence of the increasing power and greatness of the Romans, an embassy was sent to Rome by Ptolemy Philadelphus, the king of Egypt, and the greatest sovereign of his time. He was desirous of concluding a treaty of friendship and alliance with the Romans, who were very much pleased at such a compliment from so great a prince, and sent ambassadors in return to Alexandria, his capital, and at that time the most magnificent city in the world. It was built by Alexander the Great. The chief of this embassy was Fabius Gurges, the same who had conquered the Samnite prince, Pontius, and who was then head of the senate. The presents sent to the Egyptian king, were an ivory throne, and a purple toga and tunic, the customary presents of the Romans to those sovereigns whose friendship they were anxious to obtain.

Embassy sent to Rome.

The purple toga.

The purple toga was at this time the state dress of the highest magistrates; that of the senators was bordered with scarlet or purple, and was distinguished by having two broad purple stripes down the front of the tunic, which was worn under the toga. The senators wore

a Niebuhr.

black shoes, or rather half boots that came up to the middle of the leg. The tunic was of white woollen with short sleeves, and fastened with a belt, which served for a purse, and beneath it was worn another woollen garment, the use of linen being unknown till a later period. The toga had long been disused by the common people, who wore the tunic only, which was of some dark colour. Even persons of rank in the country were frequently seen without the toga, and in cold weather they would put on two or three tunics, one over the other. The Romans were fond of wearing a number of rings on their fingers; and it was customary for a lover to give a ring, as a pledge of his faith, to the lady he intended to marry.

Habits of the people.

The female dress was of white wool, with a broad coloured border and long sleeves. It was confined round the waist with a girdle. When ladies went out, they wore a large square cloak, which covered the head; and this was also made of wool, for silk was yet unknown at Rome.

Dress of slaves.

The dress of the slaves was a coarse dark tunic, and slippers. They were now the only class of men who appeared with long beards and hair, for the custom of shaving had lately been introduced from Sicily; so that the upper and middle classes had left off wearing beards; and in all great families there were slaves whose business it was to shave their masters and dress their hair. The poorer people went to barbers' shops, where it was a very common thing for women to officiate.

Progress towards luxury.

At this period, the Roman people were progressing towards that state of luxurious refinement which they afterwards carried to a height that has never been surpassed. The spoils of Greek and Etruscan cities had made them familiar with luxuries that were unknown to their forefathers; and, for this reason, sumptuary laws were enacted, and in some cases so strictly enforced, that Fabricius, one of the censors, about this very time, fined a

Patrician noble, and expelled him from the senate, because he had ten pounds weight of silver plate for the use of his table.

This Fabricius was a Plebeian by birth, and prided himself on retaining the simple habits of the ancient Romans. When out of office he, like Cincinnatus, cultivated his own little farm, and was content to sit down on a wooden bench in his cottage, and eat his pottage out of a wooden bowl. It is supposed, however, that his severity towards Rufinus, the general who made such an unusual display of silver plate, was because he suspected him of having purloined it from the booty taken at the capture of of one the Greek cities, which ought to have been all given up to the state.[a]

Fabricius and Rufinus.

Great improvements were made at Rome about this time. New aqueducts were constructed, for conveying a more plentiful supply of water into the city; and tiles were used, instead of boards, for roofing the houses, which were in general better built than they were in the first year after the invasion of the Gauls. Nothing is known respecting the literature of the Romans at this period.[b] Ballets, or pantomime dances were performed at Rome by Etruscan actors; and some rude attempts were made at operactic performances; but there were no regular plays acted till after the first Punic war.

Construction of new aqueducts.

The custom of singing heroic poems at banquets, was still continued; and, besides the songs, comic dialogues were frequently spoken by some of the company for the amusement of the rest. Oratory was studied by all young men of high families. Among the public entertainments of the Romans, none were held in such high estimation as the sports of the circus, especially those of the chariot; and horse racing. These were called the great or Roman games, and they were usually held in September.[49] At

Public entertainments.

a Niebuhr. *b* Keightley.

their first institution they lasted only three days, and were exclusively for the Patricians; but when the Licinian laws were passed, one of the privileges granted to the Plebeians, was to be admitted these games; and a fourth day was added for that purpose.

The gladiators

50 It was about this time that the first combat of gladiators was exhibited at Rome, at the funeral of a general of distinction. This barbarous spectacle, in which the combatants fought with swords until one at least was killed, was at first considered as a sacrifice in honour of the dead; and the gladiators, it is supposed, were criminals or captives already condemned to death; but in later times, these fights became one of the favourite sports of the circus, and great numbers of slaves were bought to be trained for the purpose. But even when shows of gladiators were exhibited for mere amusement, the lives of the vanquished were seldom spared: yet, strange to say, free citizens sometimes would fight for hire.

Fighting for hire.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who were the Samnites?
2 What was the origin of the citizens of Capua?
3 Where was Capua situated?
4 What other remarkable cities stood in Campania?
5 What gave rise to the Samnite wars?
6 By whom were the Samnites defeated?
7 What events followed the victory?
8 How did this revolt terminate?
9 Why did the Romans and Latins go to war about this time?
10 Who were their allies?
11 Relate the story of Manlius?
12 What other remarkable incident occurred during the war?
13 What was the result of the contest?
14 When was the conquest of Latium completed?
15 What was the subsequent condition of the Latins?

THE FIRST PUNIC WAR.

War between Rome and Carthage.

WE are now coming to [1]the celebrated wars between Rome and Carthage, known by the name of the Punic wars; punic being a term by which the ancients denoted anything relative to the Carthaginians; and derived, it is supposed, from a Greek word used in allusion to the purple colour of their garments.

The first Punic war began B.C. 263.

The Carthaginians were at this time a great people. They had established trading colonies all along the northern coast of Africa, and the south of Spain, and they were in possession of a large fertile territory, which they had taken from the native Africans, and had covered with populous towns, thriving farms, and delightful villas. [2]Like the English in India, they had become soveriegns of the land where they first gained admittance as merchants and traders; while the natives, to whom they originally paid tribute for the ground on which they built their city of Carthage, had been forced to give up a vast extent of country, and submit to be ruled by these foreign intruders.

The Africans.

Very little is known of the native Africans, nor is it certain whether the Carthaginians permitted them to retain any property in the land, or treated them merely as tenants or cultivators of the soil, that was formerly their own. They were, however, held in complete subjection, burdened with taxes, and obliged to serve as soldiers in the Carthaginian armies.

The Suffetes.

[3]Carthage, like Rome, was a republic, governed by a senate and two chief magistrates, who were not called consuls, but Suffetes, a word derived from the Hebrew language, which signifies judges, or chief rulers. [4]The government was entirely in the hands of the aristocracy; but the common people were free, and usually provided for

by grants of land, and by being sent to form new colonies in different places.

[5] As the Carthaginians were rather a commercial than a warlike nation, their armies were composed chiefly of Africans, Gauls, and Spaniards; but their generals and officers were usually Carthaginians, and many of them very able leaders, as indeed it behoved them to be; for it was a crime, by the laws of Carthage, for a general to be defeated, and he was severely punished by a fine, and in some cases by death.

Cause of the Punic war.

The cause of the first Punic war was this. [6] The Mamertines, a horde of adventurers from the south of Italy, had established themselves at Messina, in Sicily. Hiero, the king of Syracuse, was their enemy; so the Carthaginians, who had long desired to become masters of Sicily, had sent out a fleet to Messina, under pretence of protecting the Mamertines against Hiero, but in reality to gain possession of their citadel.

The Mamertines.

Under these circumstances, the Mamertines sent a deputation to the Roman senate to solicit aid; and as it was of great consequence to the Romans to prevent the Carthaginians from obtaining a fortress and a station for their fleet so near the coast of Italy, it was resolved to grant the required assistance.

This decision is considered discreditable to the Roman government, because the Mamertines were little better than a band of robbers. [7] However, a Roman army, under the command of the consuls, passed over to Sicily, and commenced war against the king of Syracuse. A great number of towns surrendered to them; but as they approached Syracuse, Hiero sent proposals of peace; which were accepted, and thus he transferred his alliance from Carthage to Rome.

Hiero's proposals of peace.

[8] Soon after this, a great victory was obtained over the Carthaginians, at the rich and populous city of

Agrigentum, on the southern coast of Sicily; when, after a long siege, the town was stormed and plundered, and the unfortunate inhabitants, amounting, it is said, to twenty thousand persons, were sold into slavery.

[9]This battle, however, was not decisive; for although the Romans had the advantage of the Carthaginians on land, they were not equal to them at sea, as they were very bad sailors, and had no fleet; whereas the Carthaginians were excellent seamen, and had plenty of good ships of war, as well as trading vessels. The Roman senate, therefore, resolved to build a fleet; but it was difficult to accomplish this purpose, because their shipwrights did not know how to construct ships of war. [10]The Greek towns of Italy could only furnish them with Triremes, which were galleys having three banks of oars one above another, and were quite unable to contend with the Carthaginian ships, with their high bulwarks.[a]

The Roman Fleet.

[11]The difficulty was at length overcome by chance, which cast on the Italian shore a Carthaginian ship of war, which was seized, and served for a model. Trees were then felled; and the shipbuilders set to work and laboured with such diligence, that one hundred and thirty vessels were completed and launched in two months. [12]They were called Quinqueremes, because they had five banks of oars; for although they were furnished with sails, they wanted rowers also.

Quinqueremes

[13]One hundred of these quinqueremes required thirty thousand rowers, that is, three hundred for each vessel; so while they were building, the men destined for this service were trained to row, by being seated on scaffolds, and instructed to go through the proper movements, and keep time with their oars.

Construction of Roman vessels.

Still the vessels were clumsy and the sailors inexperienced, so that the chief hope of the Romans was to

[a] Niebuhr.

contrive some plan by which they might board the ships of the enemy. With that view a mast was erected in tne fore part of each vessel, with a pulley at the top and a ladder fastened against it, with boards nailed over it, protected on each side by a parapet, like a drawbridge. At the end of this was an iron spike, and a ring, through which a rope ran to the pulley. By this means it could be drawn up against the mast. Now, when an enemy's ship came near enough, this bridge was let down upon it, and fixed itself by the iron spike, so that the soldiers, ascending to the top by a ladder, rushed down upon the deck of their foe, protected by their large shields; and when they thus came to close combat, they were almost sure to conquer.

B.C. 260. The first naval engagement in which the Carthaginians were beaten by the Romans.

In this manner [14] a great naval victory was gained by the consul Duilius, who was rewarded with a triumph, and the privilege, during the rest of his life, of having torches borne before him, and music playing, whenever he went out to supper.

B.C. 258. War with the Carthaginians in Sicily for several years.

[15] For three years after this event, the war was carried on in Sicily, when another naval victory was gained by the Romans, who then made preparations for invading the Carthaginian territory.

The Roman soldiers did not like the thoughts of going to Africa, for they had heard fearful tales of its forests, wild beasts, monstrous serpents, and horrors of all kinds; but they were agreeably surprised, on their arrival, to find a charming country, abounding in corn and fruits, vineyards, and pastures; with many rich cities, and elegant detached villas, surrounded by gardens and olive plantations. On this lovely land they were let loose to plunder and destroy without restraint.

The town of Clupea abandoned.

The town of Clupea, abandoned by its inhabitants, was the head quarters of the troops, and thence they sallied forth to spread their devastations over the whole

land. The country houses were ransacked and set on fire, herds of cattle driven off from the pastures, and thousands of persons, many of whom were of high rank, bred up in all the enjoyments of affluence and domestic peace, were made prisoners and sold for slaves.

Regulus, the chief commander.

16 The chief commander of the Romans was the famous Regulus, the Plebeian consul, of whom a story is told, that he sent to the senate to beg that he might be recalled, as his little farm was going to ruin, in consequence of his long absence. The answer to his appeal was, as we are told, that he must remain with the army, but that the government would take care of his farm, and provide for his family, until his return.

The Carthaginians did not venture to come to an open engagement, but kept among the mountains, only making occasional attacks; while Regulus overran the country, and made it his boast that he plundered more than three hundred walled towns and villages.[a] He took possession of the city of Tunis, which stood about twenty miles from Carthage, and quartered his army there for the winter.

The taking of Tunis.

17 In their plundering expeditions, the Romans were joined by the Numidians, a people of the interior, who took this opportunity of throwing off the dominion of the Carthaginians, and enriching themselves, by sharing in the booty of the towns they helped to destroy.

Multitudes of distressed fugitives crowded into Carthage, where provisions soon began to fail. 18 The senate then sent a deputation to Regulus to sue for peace, but the terms he demanded were so extravagant and insulting, that they were indignantly rejected, and the ruin of Carthage seemed inevitable.

The deputation to Regulus.

19 Just at this crisis, a body of troops from Greece, headed by a Spartan officer named Xanthippus, came to the assistance of the Carthaginians, and speedily changed

a Dr. Arnold.

the fortune of the war. The Romans were defeated in a battle fought on the open plain, and Regulus was made prisoner.

[20]New armies were then sent out from Italy, and the war was carried on, both in Africa and Sicily, with varied success, and great loss on both sides.

B.C. 255. Regulus, the Roman general, taken prisoner, by the Carthaginians.

[21]Regulus had been a prisoner five years, when he was sent as an ambassador from Carthage to Rome, to make proposals of peace; and, in case they should be rejected, to try to effect an exchange of prisoners, as there were many men of rank among the captives, both at Rome and at Carthage.

[22]There is a famous story about this embassy, which the ancient historians relate as truth, but that modern writers treat as a fable.

Regulus.

Regulus, we are told, dissuaded the Roman senate from making peace, or giving up the prisoners; although, by this decision, his own doom was sealed; for he had sworn to return into captivity, if the proposals should be refused, and he knew that, in that case, he would suffer a cruel death. His friends entreated him to remain with them, but he scorned to break his word; so, having taken leave of his wife and children, he returned to Carthage, where, it is said, he was barbarously put to death, by being forced into a tub full of iron spikes, and left to perish in lingering torments.

[23]This shocking story is, however, believed to be untrue; and it is supposed that Regulus died in Africa, from the effects of long confinement, and the harsh treatment to which prisoners were treated in that barbarous age.

[24]The war was continued for nine years longer; and it was during the latter part of it, that the Punic general, [25]Hamilcar Barcas, the father of the celebrated Hannibal, distinguished himself.

Hamilcar Barcas.

At length, both parties, exhausted by the enormous ex

penses of such long wars, and the diminution of their armies, were glad to make peace,[26] which was concluded on terms more favourable to the Romans than the Carthaginians; the latter being obliged to give up all their possessions in the island of Sicily, to release the prisoners without ransom, and to pay an immense sum of money to the Roman state as an indemnification for the expenses of the war.

Sicily.

[27] Thus Sicily was the first Roman province; that is, the first country acquired by the Romans out of Italy. A governor was appointed annually, and a land tax, or tribute, imposed on the people, together with other taxes; but no land was taken for the state, as in Italy, nor were any assignments made to Roman citizens. Hiero, of Syracuse, was left in possession of his small kingdom, and remained in alliance with Rome.

Close of the first Punic war.

[28] It was about two hundred and forty years before the Christian era when the first Punic war was brought to a close, [29] having lasted twenty-four years.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 What were the Punic wars?
2 What was the position of the Carthaginians in Africa?
3 How was Carthage governed?
4 What was the general condition of the people?
5 How were the armies composed?
6 What gave rise to the first Punic war?
7 How was the war commenced?
8 What great victory was gained by the Romans?
9 Was the power of the two states equal?
10 What were Triremes?
11 How did the Romans obtain a fleet?
12 What were their ships called?
13 How many rowers were required?
14 By whom was the first naval victory gained?
15 What followed?
16 Who conducted the war in Africa?

Questions on the chapter.

17 What people joined the Romans?
18 How was the arrogance of the Roman general displayed?
19 What were the consequences?
20 How did the war proceed?
21 What was the famous embassy of Regulus?
22 How is the story related?
23 What is supposed to have been the real fate of Regulus?
24 How much longer was the war continued?
25 Who was the greatest of the Carthaginian generals during that period?
26 On what terms was the peace concluded?
27 Which was the first Roman province?
28 When was this peace made?
29 What had been the duration of the war?

THE SECOND PUNIC WAR.

B.C. 238. Sardinia and Corsica taken by the Romans

[1] FOR some years after the close of the first Punic war, the Romans were engaged in extending their dominion over the north of Italy, which bore the name of Cisalpine Gaul, or Gaul on "this" side of the Alps, because it was occupied by certain tribes of Gauls, who had established themselves there by conquest. The Romans also sent armies into Sardinia and Corsica, to reduce the barbarous natives of these islands to subjection; and being successful in all these undertakings, they found themselves, at the end of twenty years from the peace with Carthage, masters of all Italy, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and some of the Greek states.

Carthaginian colonies.

[2] In the meantime, the Carthaginians, desiring to be revenged for their losses of money and territory, turned all their thoughts towards obtaining the means of going to war again. They possessed several colonies on the south coast of Spain, and had long been in the habit of trading with the natives; but the senate now resolved that, instead of carrying goods thither for sale, their ships should be employed in transporting an army to conquer the country.

The second Punic war commenced. B.C. 218.

[3]One great object in attempting this conquest, was to get possession of the rich silver mines of Spain; another, to reinforce the Carthaginian armies with Gauls and Spaniards. [4]The troops were embarked accordingly, under the command of Hamilcar, who took with him his son Hannibal, then only nine years of age.

Sacrifices to the gods.

It was the custom of the Carthaginians, before they set out on any great expedition, to offer sacrifices to the gods; and on this occasion, Hamilcar led his son up to the altar, and placing the boy's hand on the victim made him swear that he would be the enemy of Rome as long as he lived; and this vow, made in childhood, he kept faithfully to the day of his death.

Death of Hamilcar.

[5]During nine years, Hamilcar carried on war in Spain with success, and made great conquests; but at length he was killed in battle, when the command was given to [6]Hasdrubal, his son-in-law, for Hannibal was not yet old enough to take the lead.

Hasdrubal was a great and successful general. [7]He extended the dominion of the Carthaginians over a large portion of Spain, and founded the town of Carthagena, or new Carthage, which soon became a rich commercial city. [8]He had carried on the war for eight years, when he was assassinated, and then [9]the soldiers chose Hannibal to be their general, who, mindful of his vow, was impatient to renew the war with the Romans. [10]He, therefore, laid siege to Saguntum, a Greek city, near the modern Valencia, the inhabitants of which had placed themselves under the protection of the Romans, from whom they now requested aid.

The siege of Saguntum.

The Roman senate despatched an embassy to Carthage, to remonstrate against the proceedings of Hannibal; but he had received instructions to act as he thought best; so the city was stormed after a long siege, and its wretched inhabitants, who were already reduced to extreme misery

by famine, were either put to the sword, or carried away to be sold for slaves.

The Romans immediately declared war against Carthage; and thus commenced the second contest between these rival states.

Hannibal was resolved to carry the war into Italy. He set out with a very large army from Carthagena; but having to fight his way through the country of several hostile tribes of Gauls, the number of his forces was much diminished by the time he reached the foot of the Alps.

Hannibal's passage across the Alps, and invasion of Italy.

[11]The passage of this army across the Alps, is one of the most celebrated achievements recorded in the wars of the ancients. The narrow and steep paths were blocked up with snow and ice, so that there was no secure footing in ascending or descending. The difficulties appeared insurmountable, for the men had not only to make their own way, but to guide their horses and elephants along the slippery edges of precipices, where, if they made a false step, there was not a tree or bush to stay their fall. The courage and perseverance of their general, however, cheered them on; and at last, after fifteen days of incessant toil and danger, the army encamped in the valley on the Italian side of the mountains.

Courage and perseverance

A similar exploit was performed in modern times by Bonaparte, who conducted his army over the Alps into Italy, when he was first consul of the French Republic; and the hardships encountered by his troops must have been as great as those of the soldiers of Hannibal.

It is not known whether the route of these two great generals was the same. That of Bonaparte was over Mount St. Bernard, and some are of opinion that this was also the passage of Hannibal; while others think that he crossed at a different part of the mountains.

Hannibal and Scipio.

[12]As soon as it was known at Rome that Hannibal was in Italy, the consul Scipio was sent to give him battle; but

the usual good fortune of the Romans deserted them on this occasion, for they were defeated and put to flight with great loss, and their general was wounded.

Soon afterwards, the other consul, Sempronius, arrived with a reinforcement, and a second battle was fought, in which the invaders were again victorious.

Third defeat of the Romans.

Then Hannibal marched into Etruria, and there the Romans sustained a third defeat, still more calamitous than either of the former ones; and Flaminius, one of the new consuls, was slain.

[13] The Carthaginian army then advanced towards the south, burning and destroying everything in their way, till at length they established themselves in the citadel of a town called Cannæ, in Apulia, a country bordering on the Adriatic sea.

B.C. 216. Defeat of the Romans and the battle of Cannæ.

[14] Near this town was fought the most celebrated battle of the second Punic war; and here the Romans sustained the greatest defeat recorded in their history. Never had so many Romans fallen, or been made prisoners, as at the battle of Cannæ; and the grief occasioned at Rome by this calamity, was testified by a general mourning, and the suspension of all religious rites for thirty days.

The loss of men had to be supplied [15] by raising new legions; and among those who were enlisted in the army on this occasion, were eight thousand slaves, who were bought of their masters by the state, and were very willing to enter into the service, because, at the end of the campaign, they were to receive their freedom.

Many allied nations join Hannibal.

Many of the allied nations, thinking the power of Rome was now coming to an end, joined the invaders; and Hannibal, advancing into Campania, took up his quarters in the city of Capua.

[16] In the meantime, the Romans, under Scipio, had been more successful in Spain, where many of the towns that had submitted to the Carthaginians, were taken, and whole

tribes of natives induced to join the enemies of Carthage. This probably had an effect upon the war in Italy, where the tide of fortune began to ebb. [17] Hannibal was defeated in his turn, in a battle near Mount Vesuvius, when a large body of Spaniards and Numidians went over to the Romans.

Death of Hiero.

[18] About this time died Hiero, king of Syracuse, at an advanced age. He had been much beloved by his people, and a faithful ally to the Romans; but his successor, a youth only fifteen, was persuaded to enter into an alliance with the Carthaginians; and although he was soon assassinated, the Punic party maintained the ascendancy at Syracuse.

Building of the new fleet.

In this state of affairs, it was resolved at Rome to build a new fleet to send to Sicily, and every citizen who could afford to do so, was obliged to furnish one or more sailors, according to the amount of his property, and to give them a year's pay.

It would be impossible, in the limited space of this volume, to relate the varied events of this war, which was going on in Italy, Sicily, and Spain, at the same time. Many towns in the south of Italy had revolted from the Romans, and among them, those of [19] Capua and Tarentum. A remarkable victory was, however, gained by the Roman general, Gracchus, over Hanno, a Carthaginian officer, second in command to Hannibal.

The soldiers of Gracchus.

[20] The soldiers of Gracchus consisted chiefly of the slaves mentioned, who had been promised their freedom, and were beginning to murmur, as the time had arrived when they were to have been discharged. Gracchus, being about to attack Hanno, told his men that whoever should bring him the head of any enemy, should be freed on the spot; consequently the men fought most gallantly, and won the battle. The general then led them triumphantly to Beneventum, a great city, where the people spread tables

in the streets, and gave them a good feast, and every man was made free. Gracchus had this interesting scene painted in the Temple of Liberty on the Aventine hill.

B.C. 214. Famous siege of Syracuse.

[21] At this time, Marcellus, the Roman commander in Sicily, was engaged in besieging Syracuse, which was defended by Archimedes, a celebrated geometrician and astronomer, and a near relative of the late king. It was he who first constructed globes, to show the motions of the heavenly bodies, and he was the inventor of the screw pump, wherein water rises progressively through a revolving spiral tube, and which, to this day, is called Archimedes' screw.

B.C. 212. Capture of the city, and death of Archimedes.

[22] When Syracuse was at length taken and pillaged by the Romans, Marcellus gave orders that no one should do injury to Archimedes; but unfortunately he was killed by mistake, much to the regret of the Roman general, who was very sorry to have the world deprived of so great a man.

Syracuse abounded in pictures, statues, and other works of Grecian art, which were all sent to adorn the Roman Capitol.

[23] It was during the Sicilian war that gold was first coined at Rome.[a]

Capua besieged.

The Romans were now besieging Capua, which, as already stated, had revolted from the state; and as Hannibal could not break through the camp of the besiegers to join his allies in the city, he decided upon marching direct to Rome, thinking that this measure would oblige the senate to recall the army from Capua to defend the Capitol. It is said that he encamped within three miles of Rome, and even led his troops up to its very gates; but it is not explained in a very satisfactory manner why no attempt was made upon the city, nor why he departed without fighting any battle.

a Annals of Commerce.

[24] On the retreat of Hannibal from Rome, the city of Capua, from which only a part of the army had been withdrawn, was surrendered, and a terrible revenge was taken for the defection of its inhabitants. All the senators were either put to death or imprisoned; and the rest of the people, men, women, and children, were dragged away to be sold for slaves; after which the town and its territory were confiscated to the state.

Progress of the war in Spain.

[25] The war at this time was not going on very favourably in Spain. The Roman general, Scipio, had fallen in battle, and the Carthaginians had recovered most of the places that he had taken from them. Then no one seemed willing to go out from Rome, to take the command there but a [26] very young man, a son of Scipio, who had already distinguished himself in Italy, and was destined to become one of the greatest characters of his time. Young Scipio was gifted with great personal advantages and held in much veneration by the common people, because he frequently went alone to the Capitol, where, it was believed, he held conferences with the gods.

The character of Scipio.

Scipio embarked for Spain with a considerable force. His first exploit was to capture the rich city of Carthagena, where the military stores and treasures of the Carthaginians were kept, and where there was a number of captives of rank, who had been detained as hostages for the fidelity of the native princes. These were all liberated by Scipio, who, by his good policy, gained many allies among the Spanish chiefs, as all the hostages were of high rank, and many of them beautiful maidens, whose fathers came with joy and gratitude to receive them from the hands of the young conqueror.

End of Carthaginian dominion in Spain.

[27] In the course of five years, Scipio had put an end to the Carthaginian dominion in Spain; and on his return to Rome, was elected consul.

In the meantime, Hasdrubal, the brother of Hannibal,

who had been left as chief commander in Spain, finding that he could not prevent the Romans from establishing their power in that country, thought it would be the wisest course to lead his forces into Italy to assist his brother. He crossed the Alps where Hannibal had gone before him, but his passage was much easier, as the first army had cleared away many of the chief impediments, and made a rude path in the most difficult places. He marched directly southward, but, being intercepted by the armies of both Roman consuls, was killed in a battle, and his troops cut to pieces, dispersed, or made prisoners.

Hasdrubal killed.

When Hannibal heard of this disaster, he saw that all hope of conquering the Romans was at an end, so he retreated to the coast, there to await what might happen.

B.C. 206. Expedition of Scipio to Africa.

[28] While Hannibal was yet in Italy, Scipio, ambitious of rendering his name immortal by the conquest of Carthage, requested to be sent into Africa, to carry on the war there, as Regulus had done; but the senate opposed this proposition, and refused to grant any supplies either of men or money for such an expedition.

[29] Scipio, however, was bent on carrying his design into execution; so he raised money by subscription to build and equip a fleet of thirty-five ships; and when they were completed, he went into Sicily, where he assembled an army of volunteers, both horse and foot soldiers, who were ready to embark in any enterprise under so renowned a leader.

The landing of Scipio near Carthage.

Thus, as soon as the term of the consulate was expired, he sailed over to Africa, at the head of a fine fleet, and a large army. [30] He landed near Carthage, where he was joined by Massinissa, a prince of Numidia, who had deserted the cause of the Carthaginians during the war in Spain, and formed a friendly alliance with the Roman hero.

[31] Massinissa, it is stated, had been educated at Carthage, and betrothed to a maiden of high birth and exceeding beauty, named Sophonisba, whose father, Hasdrubal, was

one of the rulers of the state. But the lady was also admired by Syphax, a powerful Numidian prince, who was in alliance with the Romans; and it was for the sake of inducing him to break his alliance that Hasdrubal broke his faith with Massinissa, and gave the hand of his daughter to Syphax, who had usurped the dominions of his rival.

Scipio and Massinissa.

Scipio and Massinissa laid waste the country, and set at liberty numbers of Roman captives, whom they found working in the fields. [32] Hasdrubal, the father of Sophonisba, ventured a battle, but was driven back with great loss. He was soon afterwards joined by Syphax; and these two generals, with their respective armies, encamped for the winter within sight of the Romans, who had taken up their position on a small peninsula in the bay of Carthage.

Plan of Scipio.

[33] While both parties were thus inactive, Scipio formed and executed a cruel and revolting plan for the destruction of the Carthaginians. He sent spies into their camp, under pretence of making proposals of peace, but in reality to see the nature of their encampment, and how it might best be attacked. He was told that the huts of the soldiers were made of wood or reeds and dried leaves, and he also learned in what manner they were arranged: so he formed his designs accordingly, and for some time continued to carry on a pretended negotiation respecting terms of peace. The generals thought he was sincere, so they neglected to take the usual precautions for guarding against surprise. This was what Scipio wanted; and taking advantage of their fancied security, he led out his troops silently in the middle of the night, and set fire to the camps of both armies. The flames spread with such rapidity that the affrighted soldiers, waking from their sleep, and thinking the conflagration was accidental, rushed out without staying to dress or arm themselves, and in that state were cut to pieces by their treacherous foe. Hasdrubal and Syphax

The burning of the camps.

both escaped; but of their unfortunate soldiers, it is stated, that out of forty thousand, not above three thousand were saved. The poor horses and elephants mostly perished in the flames.

[34] A new army was speedily raised, and a battle was fought in the open plain, when the lucky star of Scipio again prevailed, and he gained a decisive victory.

Syphax made prisoner.

Soon after this, Syphax was made prisoner, and Massinissa took possession of his capital, and, it is said, married the beautiful Sophonisba. There are several different stories relating to this event, but they all agree as to the tragical fate of the princess who, to avoid being seized by the Romans as a part of their lawful spoil, terminated her life by poison, sent or presented to her by Massinissa.

[35] The Carthaginians now wished to make peace. An embassy was sent to Rome to negotiate, and a truce was granted by Scipio until the ambassadors should return with the answer of the senate. But in the meantime Hannibal was recalled; and the prospect of his return aroused at Carthage a spirit of opposition to the peace. The popular party declared against it, and broke the truce by seizing on some ships that were bringing supplies of corn from Sicily for the Roman army; and when Scipio sent envoys to complain of the outrage, they were insulted, and some of them killed, notwithstanding the efforts of the magistrates to protect them.

B.C. 202. Hannibal recalled from Italy.

War with Philip, king of Macedon.

About this time, Hannibal landed with a considerable force, as great numbers of Italians and Roman deserters had enlisted in his service; still he thought it would be wiser to make peace than to continue the war, and would have concluded the treaty, but that [36] the majority of the people at Carthage were bent upon trusting to the event of another battle. It was fought at Zama, and won by the Romans. The greater part of the Carthaginian army was cut to pieces, but Hannibal escaped, and returned to

The battle of Zama.

Carthage, where he advised the senate to make peace on the best terms they could.

The conditions of Scipio.

The conditions now proposed by Scipio were, as might have been expected, much harder than those on which he would have concluded a peace before the battle. [37]The Carthaginians were not to retain any possessions in Spain. They were to engage not to go to war with any nation without the consent of the Romans. They were to give up all prisoners and deserters, and all their ships of war but ten; to keep no elephants for the purpose of war; to pay an enormous sum of money to the Roman state, by annual instalments; and to restore to Massinissa his kingdom of Numidia. Such were the conditions on which peace was granted to Carthage; and to ensure the performance of them, the Romans required one hundred and fifty hostages, to be selected from the highest families.

[38]Thus ended the second Punic war, which had lasted seventeen years; and this event brings the history of Rome down to [39]about two hundred years before the Christian era.

End of the second Punic war.

[40]The remainder of the history of Hannibal may be told in a few words. He was placed at the head of the Carthaginian government, and introduced some great reforms, by which he made many enemies, who, it seems, excited the Romans to invent a pretext for demanding that he should be given up to them; on which he fled to the court of Antiochus, king of Syria, who was very glad to receive him, because he was just about to go to war with the Romans, and he thought Hannibal might be of assistance to him. This was about ten years after the peace with Carthage.

Hannibal and the king of Syria.

Hannibal tried to dissuade the king from entering upon this war, which, he foresaw, would not be successful; but Antiochus was so satisfied of his own power, that he slighted the advice which he had better have followed; for

after an unsuccessful campaign in Greece, he returned to his own dominions, whither he was followed by a Roman army, under the command of the great Scipio and his brother, who was then consul. Scipio had, himself, served the high offices of consul and censor, since the African war, from which he had derived the name of Africanus, and was still one of the first men in the state.

The desire of Antiochus for peace.

When Antiochus found that the Romans had actually landed in Asia, under the conduct of such able generals, he expressed a desire to make peace; but his pride would not allow him to make such concessions as were expected, so the decision was left to a battle, which was won by the Romans; for the armies of the east, although superior in numbers, were far inferior in warlike ability, to those of Rome.

[41] Antiochus was now glad to obtain peace, even by conceding the whole of Asia Minor, except Cilicia, to the conquerors; and as he could no longer afford protection to Hannibal, [42] that general sought refuge with Prusias, king of Bithynia, a small kingdom on the coast of the Euxine, or Black Sea. But he found no safety there, for as soon as the Romans knew where he was, they sent ambassadors to the king, demanding the surrender of the fugitive, who immediately put an end to his own life by poison.

B.C. 183. Death of Hannibal.

Death of Scipio Africanus.

[43] Scipio died about the same time; and, strange to say, in exile. The cause of this change in his fortune was, that he had been accused of appropriating a part of the spoils of war, which ought to have been delivered up to the state; or rather he had given no account of the way in which he had disposed of certain sums of money that had come into his possession during the wars.

Employment of spoils and money.

The Roman generals had a right to employ the spoils and money taken from an enemy, according to their own discretion, either by distributing them among the soldiers, or sending them to the treasury; but it was their duty to

render an account; and it was for neglect on this point, that Scipio was impeached. It seems doubtful whether he could not, or would not, give the account required; but it appears that he thought proper to withdraw himself from Rome, and take up his abode in one of the cities of Campania, where he died.

Changes made by conquests in the east.

44 The conquests made in the east, and the riches gained there, produced great changes at Rome, where the nobles and officers began to fill their houses with costly furniture, carpets, plate, and luxuries of various kinds. They were not very refined in their tastes, for literature and the fine arts were not much cultivated till a later period; so they expended their wealth in good living, trying to emulate each other in loading their tables with the most expensive viands, and having the best cooks, who were engaged at enormous salaries.[a]

Effects of the wars.

45 The wars, however, which had enriched the higher classes, had greatly impoverished those of a lower grade. Provisions were dear, and the taxes heavy, so that the middle classes had felt severely the pressure of the times; and thus the separation between the rich and the poor had become more marked than at any former period. One thing, however, ought not to be omitted, which is, that after the second Punic war, the veteran soldiers received settlements in the south of Italy, which was the first time any provisions had been made for men who had grown old in the service of their country.

Conquest of Macedonia.

46 The next great conquest of the Romans was that of Macedonia, which had never been a powerful state since the death of Alexander the Great. Philip, king of Macedon, who had long been at war with Rome, died about twenty years after the close of the Punic war, leaving his kingdom to his son Perseus. A cause of quarrel with the new monarch was soon found, for the Romans were

[a] Niebuhr.

desirous of putting an end to the kingdom of Macedonia, and of extending their empire over the whole of Greece.

B.C. 171. War between the Romans and Perseus, king of Macedon.

The details of this war, which lasted four years, belong rather to Grecian than Roman history. The Macedonians were conquered, and obliged to pay an annual tribute to the Romans: but their country was not converted into a Roman province until some time afterwards.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the Chapter.

1 How did the Romans extend their dominion after the first Punic war?

2 What was the origin of the second Punic war?

3 Why was Spain invaded?

4 Who conducted the invasion?

5 How long did Hamilcar carry on the war?

6 Who succeeded him?

7 How did Hasdrubal distinguish himself?

8 What became of him?

9 Who succeeded to the command?

10 How did he provoke a fresh war with the Romans?

11 What is remarkable of Hannibal's march into Italy?

12 What misfortunes befel the Romans in the early part of the war?

13 How did the Carthaginians proceed after these victories?

14 What was the battle of Cannæ?

15 How did the Romans recruit their armies?

16 What had occurred meanwhile in Spain?

17 What reverses were experienced by Hannibal.

18 Why was the war carried into Sicily?

19 Which of the Italian towns had revolted from the Romans?

20 What remarkable victory was won by Gracchus?

21 Who was Archimedes?

22 How did he lose his life?

23 When was gold first coined at Rome?

24 How were the people of Capua punished for their defection?

25 How did the war proceed in Spain?

26 Who was appointed to the chief command in that county?

Questions on the Chapter.

27 What was his success?
28 What was the great object of his ambition?
29 How did he accomplish his design?
30 Who joined him on his landing?
31 Why had Massinissa deserted the cause of Carthage?
32 Who were the Carthaginian generals?
33 How were the Carthaginian armies destroyed?
34 What followed this act of treachery?
35 Why was a truce granted and broken?
36 What took place after Hannibal's arrival?
37 On what terms was peace concluded?
38 How long had the war lasted?
39 When was it terminated?
40 How does the history of Hannibal proceed?
41 What was the result of the war in the east?
42 What became of Hannibal?
43 Which of the Roman generals died about the same time?
44 How was Rome affected by the wars in the east?
45 Were all classes benefitted by the increase of riches?
46 What was the next conquest made by the Romans?

CONQUESTS OF CARTHAGE AND GREECE.

Rome and Carthage.

[1]THE peace between Rome and Carthage had lasted about fifty years, during which the Carthaginians had regularly paid their instalments of tribute, and been careful not to give the Romans any just cause of complaint.

Condition of Carthage.

The city of Carthage was still wealthy and populous. [2]Its territory, which now only comprised the modern state of Tunis and part of Tripoli, had been greatly diminished, and its army reduced[3] by constant wars with Massinissa, who was now a very old man, and who had always been encouraged by the Romans in his encroachments on the Carthaginian dominions.

B.C. 149. The third Punic war began.

There can be no doubt that the Romans had long meditated the destruction of Carthage, but they had waited till all the money was paid according to the last treaty of

peace; and as that heavy debt was now discharged,[4] they took the opportunity of some dispute between the Carthaginians and Massinissa to interfere in behalf of their ally, and declare war against Carthage.

The consuls led their armies into Sicily, where they were met by ambassadors from the Carthaginians, who were desirous of coming to an accommodation. They were told that the Romans were willing to remain at peace; but that they must have security for the good faith of the Carthaginians; theeefore[5] they required that three hundred children of the noblest families should be delivered up as hostages; and as[6] there was no other hope of avoiding the war, the children were taken from their heart-broken parents, and sent to Sicily. But this sacrifice was unavailing, for the ruin of Carthage was resolved upon, and the Romans crossed over into Africa, to the great terror of the Carthaginians, who again sent ambassadors to learn their intentions. [7]The Consuls told them that the Roman senate required that the Carthaginians should give up all their arms; and even this hard command was obeyed, although the city was thus left without means of defence; and all the weapons and armour of every description were conveyed in waggons to the Roman camp.

Three hundred children delivered up as hostages.

But the Romans were not yet satisfied. [8]They issued a command that the whole population of Carthage should leave the city and build a new town, without walls, at ten miles distance from the coast. This announcement caused a dreadful tumult at Carthage. Some of the unfortunate men who had advised the giving up of the arms and hostages, were torn to pieces by the infuriated mob, and all the Romans and Italians who happened to be there were put to death with horrible tortures. Despair, however, gave courage to the citizens, who determined on resistance. [9]They worked night and day to manufacture new arms, the women assisting; and, in short, all joined with one

Population of Carthage commanded to leave the city.

accord in doing every thing that could be done to save the city from its impending fate.

Four years' war.

The Romans did not carry on a regular siege, because they had to contend with Carthaginian forces out of the city, so that they met on all sides with more opposition than they had expected, and thus [10]the war was protracted for nearly four years.

Scipio, one of the tribunes.

[11]The most distinguished commander among the Romans was one of the tribunes, who bore the famous name of Scipio. He was the son of Paullus Æmilius, the conqueror of Macedonia, but adopted into the family of the Scipios; and was elected consul on purpose that he might take the management of the African war, which he conducted to its close. [12]Carthage was at length taken.

B.C. 146. Carthage taken and destroyed by the Romans.

The scene at the capture of this noble city was frightful beyond description. The houses in the great streets leading from the market place, were six or eight stories high, with flat roofs, and these were conquered one by one, the soldiers breaking through the walls from room to room, and fighting on the roofs, whence they hurled the wretched people into the streets below. Those alone were spared who begged to be reserved for slaves. Every house was, of course, plundered, and the town was set on fire in many places. [13]Hasdrubal, the general, had taken refuge in one of the temples; but this being set on fire, his courage failed him, and he prayed to Scipio to save his life, who readily granted the request, because he thought it would add to the glory of his triumph to have the Carthaginian general walking in chains before him. His wife, indignant at his cowardice, reproached him in bitter terms from the summit of the temple, and then threw herself, with her children, into the flames.

Thus perished the once mighty city of Carthage, which had stood for seven hundred years. [14]It was so completely destroyed, that no remains were left of its buildings, ex-

cept the foundations, which in some parts, are still visible.

A portion of the territory of Carthage given to the king of Numidia.

15 A portion of its territory was given to the king of Numidia, and the rest was formed into a Roman province. This Scipio, like the former one, received the surname of Africanus.

16 In the meantime, a rebellion had broken out in Macedonia, which caused a renewal of the war in that country, and led to the complete conquest of all Greece.

The city of Corinth taken and burnt by the Romans.

17 The most remarkable event of this war was the destruction of Corinth, one of the most opulent cities of antiquity, and full of the finest works of Grecian art. It was burned 146 B.C., in the same year that witnessed the fall of Carthage, and most of its inhabitants were sold for slaves.

18 The ruin of two such great commercial cities made a complete revolution in the affairs of all nations that had traded with the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, as thousands of industrious people were obliged to seek other resources than those of trade for subsistence; and many men, who had been bred to the sea, being no longer employed in mercantile affairs, turned pirates; while the

The danger of slaves.

Romans brought difficulties upon themselves by the immense number of slaves they had made in these wars, who could not be expected to entertain any friendly feelings towards those who had brought them into so wretched a condition, and were therefore dangerous, in case of insurrection, especially in Sicily, where many thousands of them were located.[a]

19 The fall of Corinth was a means of introducing a taste for fine arts among the Romans, as many of the best works of the Grecian painters and sculptors were carried to Rome. An anecdote is related of one of the consuls, who, when superintending the shipping of some of the finest statues, told the master of the vessel that, if any of them were broken, he must have others made at his own cost.[b]

[a] Annals of Commerce. [b] Annals of Commerce.

Education among men of rank.

It does not follow, however, that all the Roman consuls were equally ignorant, although a knowledge of the fine arts was not yet generally diffused. There were many men of rank among the Romans, who had been educated in Greece, and others who had been instructed at Rome, by Greek masters; therefore it would be wrong to conclude that none of the Romans were more enlightened on the subject of art than the worthy consul alluded to.

The destruction of works of art.

Some of the most valuable pictures found at Corinth, were destroyed by the soldiers, who converted them into tables to play at dice upon. [20] While the Romans were thus making conquests in Greece and Africa, they had a great deal of trouble to keep possession of their dominions in Spain, where the natives were continually in arms against them, and in many instances were treated with the most shocking barbarity.

[21] At length, when Greece and Carthage were finally subdued, and settled as provinces of the Roman empire, the senate resolved to prosecute the war in Spain, until the Roman government was finally established there.[22] Different consuls were sent out year after year. without success; till at last, Scipio was once more raised to the consulate, and sent out to gain fresh laurels among the Spaniards.

The Laurel crown.

[23] Every one knows that a laurel crown was one of the most honourable badges of military distinction among the Romans. It was usually worn by a victorious general at his triumph, and had been bestowed on Scipio, after the conquest of Carthage.

[24] But there were other crowns still more highly esteemed, and more difficult of attainment; as the civic crown, made of oak leaves, conferred on him who had saved the life of a Roman citizen in battle, and slain his opponent: to obtain this, it was necessary that the clearest testimony should be given of the facts; and if they were

proved, the fortunate soldier, his father, and grandfather, were exempted from taxes, and the individual whose life had been preserved, was bound to assist him, during the rest of his days. [25]Then there was the mural crown, a circular tiara of gold adorned with turrets, which was presented to that soldier who first scaled the walls of a besieged town.

All crowns bestowed as rewards of merit, might be worn on public occasions. Golden crowns were often sent from the provinces as presents to a general, when a triumph was decreed him, and were carried in the procession. [26]The dominion of the Romans in Spain had been extended over that part of the country which now forms the provinces of Catalonia, Valencia, and Andalusia; but their authority had not been very well maintained, and[27] at the time of which I am now speaking, they were involved in a war with the Celtiberians, the bravest of the Spanish tribes,[28] who occupied a large portion of the country, including La Mancha, Andalusia, Old and New Castile, with part of Valencia and Arragon.

The dominion of the Romans in Spain.

The Celtiberians were not an uncivilized people, for they had large fortified towns and a regular form of government. [29]One of their chief cities was Numantia, in the neighbourhood of the modern Soria, in the province of Old Castile, and this was the principal scene of the war. When Scipio arrived, he laid siege to this city, which held out until famine obliged the people to surrender.

[30]During all the Roman wars, there never occurred a more distressing scene than was witnessed at the capture of Numantia. The wretched inhabitants, having requested a truce of three days, to consider whether they should open their gates to the Romans, employed the time in destroying their wives and children as the only means of saving them from the horrors of slavery. Numbers of the men also put an end to their own existence; so that when the gates

were opened, a few haggard beings came forth, more dead than alive, and these were sent to the slave-markets, while their devoted city was razed to the ground.

B.C. 133. Numantia destroyed.

The fall of Numantia put an end to the war for the time, and Scipio returned to Rome.

In passing through Gaul, this general visited Massilia, or Marseilles, as it is now called, where he held conferences with the principal merchants, from whom he endeavoured to gain some information respecting the island of Britain, with which they carried on an overland trade; but they would not satisfy his curiosity, because they did not want the Romans to interfere with their British commerce.[a] [31]Just before this time, a servile war, or insurrection of the slaves, had broken out in Sicily, where great numbers of freemen were massacred, and the leader of the insurgents was made king.

Slaves and freemen.

[32]Since the island of Sicily had been held by the Romans, whole districts had been converted into public land; that is, land considered to belong to the state; and the use of it had been granted, on certain conditions, to a number of speculators, and formed into large estates, on which immense numbers of slaves were kept, who were, in general, very cruelly treated. [33]The wars had filled the markets with captives, who were sold for a mere trifle; so that the landholders found it much cheaper to employ them than to hire free labourers. [34]They were obliged to work in chains, almost naked, were kept in dungeons, and were scarcely allowed enough food to keep them alive; yet many of these unhappy creatures had been men of rank in their own countries; therefore it was not surprising that they should take advantage of every opportunity that seemed to afford a hope of liberating themselves; and whenever they rose in rebellion, they were sure to be joined by others, who

a Annals of Commerce.

were born to slavery, as well as by gangs of robbers and all kinds of bad characters.

Insurrection of slaves in Sicily suppressed.

[35] This insurrection was quelled with much difficulty, but the country was desolated from one end to the other; and left in a most wretched condition.

The conduct of the Roman government.

At this period, the government of Rome was not conducted in a manner calculated to preserve its republican constitution. [36] The numerous class of small farmers, that formerly constituted the strength of the commonwealth, had become nearly extinct. Instead of the laborious and frugal husbandmen, who used to repair to the wars, when their services were required, and return to their farms as soon as the campaign was over, we now find a race of

Roman troops.

soldiers attached altogether to a military life; and as troops were kept stationed in all the provinces, there was plenty of employment for them.

[37] Most of the small farms had been sold or given up from various causes, so that the rich had large estates, and the poor, for the most part, had no land at all.

Then the distinctions between Patricians and Plebeians had entirely ceased. The richest men were now the greatest, and all the high offices were obtained by those who could afford to spend the most money, in bribing the voters at the elections.

The farming of the revenues of the state.

Another source of evil, was the custom already noticed, of farming the revenues of the state. [38] There were large companies of wealthy men at Rome, who contracted for different branches of the revenue; that is, they paid so much a year to the government for the right of collecting the taxes, tolls, and duties of every description, so that whatever they received beyond what they had engaged to pay, was their own; therefore it was evidently their interest to extort as much as they possibly could from the people.

Publicans.

[39] These men were called Publicans. Every firm or

company had agents in the provinces, and employed a number of inferior officers, both Roman and provincials, as collectors, and these also were frequently termed publicans, as we find in the New Testament, where they are often mentioned; for the Romans, in the time of our Saviour, were in possession of all Syria and Judæa, where every city was under the control of their civil officers and soldiers.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the Chapter.

1 How long were the Romans at peace with Carthage?
2 What was the extent of the Carthaginian territory at this period?
3 How had it been diminished?
4 On what ground did the Romans declare war?
5 How did the Consuls receive proposals of peace?
6 Were these terms complied with?
7 What further concessions were made?
8 What more did the Romans demand?
9 How did the Carthaginians act on this?
10 How long was the war continued?
11 Who was the most distinguished of the Roman commanders?
12 What was the result of the war?
13 What remarkable incident occurred at the capture of the city?
14 What was the fate of Carthage?
15 How was its territory disposed of?
16 What other conquest was made about the same time?
17 Which of the Grecian cities was destroyed?
18 What consequences resulted from the ruin of Carthage and Corinth?
19 How were the Romans improved by their conquests in Greece?
20 How did the affairs of Spain proceed?
21 What resolution was adopted by the senate?
22 Who was appointed to conduct the war?
23 What badge of distinction was worn by a successful general?

Questions on the Chapter.

24 Describe the civic crown.
25 Describe the mural crown.
26 How far was the Roman dominion extended in Spain?
27 Which of the native tribes was at war with the Romans?
28 What part of the country was occupied by this nation?
29 Which of their cities was besieged by Scipio?
30 What took place at the capture of Numantia?
31 What was the servile war?
32 How were the public lands in Sicily occupied?
33 How had slaves become so numerous in Sicily?
34 What was their condition?
35 What was the event of the insurrection?
36 What change had taken place with regard to the Commons of Rome?
37 Who were the principal landowners at this period?
38 Who were the Publicans?
39 How did they carry on their business in the provinces?

SEDITION OF THE GRACCHI.

Tiberius Gracchus

[1] It was immediately after the servile war in Sicily, that one of the tribunes, Tiberius Gracchus, distinguished himself by his efforts to better the condition of the poor, by restoring the old Licinian laws, and making small grants of land, according to the former custom. [2] A violent opposition was made by the large landholders, who, in case of the revival of these laws, would have been obliged to employ free labourers instead of slaves, and to give up all the land they held above 500 jugers, to be divided among the destitute citizens, most of whom were men discharged from the armies.

Insecurity of the tenure of land.

[3] We must always bear in mind, that persons occupying land belonging to the state, whether they had bought it of others, or received it as an inheritance from their fathers, were liable to be called upon to give it up, at any time that it might be required for other purposes. However, on this occasion, those who held great estates said it was very hard

they should be compelled to give up lands they had purchased, or received in dowry with their wives; but Gracchus said this was not so hard as that men who had fought for their country should not have the means of subsistence, although the law had made provision for them, and, in fact, that a share of the land was their right, and those who withheld it were robbing them.

Much, indeed, might be said on both sides, for some of those estates had been in the possession of the same families for more than a hundred years; and others had been bought by persons who never had supposed that they would have been taken away from them. In many cases, the purchasers had laid out large sums in erecting buildings, as well as in planting olives, which are a long time before they bear fruit. It was certainly rather hard to be all at once dispossessed of such property; but [4]to compensate in some measure for the loss, all buildings were to be valued, and the price affixed given in money to the owners.

Possession of estates.

[5]After a long and hard struggle, the law was at length passed, and three commissioners appointed to regulate the new division of the lands. These were Tiberius Gracchus, his brother Caius, and his father-in-law, Appius Claudius.

It had happened, just before this, that Attalus, king of Pergamos, had died without heirs, and bequeathed his kingdom to the Roman people, who thus acquired a rich territory in Asia, as well as vast treasures, most of the eastern monarchs being very rich. Now, as this legacy was left to the people generally, Gracchus proposed a law that the treasures should be employed in purchasing agricultural implements, and other necessaries, for those who received grants of land, as it was of little use giving them the ground without the means of cultivating it; and this law also was passed.

Attalus.

[6]The Gracchi, that is, Gracchus and his brother, were the sons of Cornelia, the daughter of the first Scipio

The Gracchi.

Africanus, a woman of a very superior mind, who had herself educated her two sons in the principles of patriotic virtue. But those who endeavour to benefit a whole community at the expense of wealthy individuals, are sure to make enemies; so [7] when Gracchus had served the year of his tribuneship, a great opposition was made to his being re-elected, and he was killed in the tumult that ensued.

Tiberius Gracchus, a popular reformer, murdered.

[8] In consequence of the untimely death of this distinguished patriot, his laws were acted upon but slowly, and not to any great extent. The great landholders did every thing in their power to prevent them from being carried into effect. [9] Scipio, who had just returned from Spain, joined this party, and was one morning found dead in his bed. How he died, none could tell; but it was generally supposed he was murdered; and it was probably to avoid a popular disturbance, that no enquiries were instituted, and that the conqueror of Carthage was buried privately.

The condition of the poor.

Ten years had passed away, and very little benefit had resulted to the poor from the exertions of Tiberius Gracchus, when his brother Caius was made a tribune. He had rather avoided than sought public honours; but being elected to this office, he exhibited as much good feeling towards the people as his brother had done. [10] One of his first acts was to pass a decree for the enforcement of his brother's Agrarian law; and although the affair went on slowly, some progress was made. He then made a law that corn should be sold at a low price to the poor of the city, and he built large corn magazines, where they could be supplied.

The Romans had no poor laws, except those which related to the distribution of lands, so that the number of paupers in the capital was immense; consequently, a law which enabled them at least to get bread to eat, could not be other than a good one. Gracchus would have been very glad to have provided for all these poor people by giving

them a piece of land to cultivate; but in the meantime he thought they ought not to be left to starve, as the state was quite rich enough to contribute towards their support.

[11] Another law of Caius Gracchus was, that the soldiers should be clothed by the government, and not at their own cost; for, up to this time, the expenses of their arms and clothing had always been deducted from their pay. [12] The pay of a foot soldier, about this time, was two ases a day. An as was, as before stated, a brass coin, the value of which was different at different periods, as the weight had from time to time been depreciated, till, from a pound, it was now diminished to half an ounce. [13] Two ases were, at this time, equal to about 2½d. of our money, and would buy a modius and a-half of wheat, a modius being a little more than a peck.[a]

The law of Caius Gracchus respecting soldiers.

Pay of the soldiers.

[14] But notwithstanding his good acts, Caius Gracchus lost his popularity at Rome, by proposing to extend the Roman franchise to all the Italians; that is, he thought they ought all to have the same privileges as the citizens of Rome; and to be allowed, like them, to vote at the elections, to fill offices of state, and to sit in the senate. Rome would thus have become the capital of Italy, as London is that of England; and there would have been no more distinction between Romans and Italians than between the inhabitants of London and those of other parts of England.

Extension of the Roman franchise.

[15] Caius Gracchus, like his brother, fell a sacrifice to his good intentions. [16] It seems that he had incurred the hatred of one Opimius, by opposing his election to the consulship, but that Opimius gained it the following year, when he took a dreadful revenge. A Roman mob was always inclined to be riotous; and one day, when a great crowd was assembled on some public occasion, Gracchus was insulted by one of the lictors of Opimius, who, in

a Annals of Commerce.

clearing the way for the consul, called out to Gracchus and his friends, "Make way, you bad citizens, for good ones!" This raised a tumult, and the lictor was killed. A terrible confusion ensued, and the party of Opimius, took up arms against that of Gracchus, the chief of which at last fled for sanctuary to a sacred grove; and finding himself pursued, desired one of his slaves to kill him. Thus ended what should be called "the patriotism," but which is usually termed, in Roman history, "the sedition of the Gracchi."

Caius Gracchus also assassinated. B.C. 121.

Opimius.

It is stated that Opimius, during his consulship, put to death as many as three thousand persons, who had supported the liberal views of the Gracchi, most of them men of distinction. Their bodies were thrown into the Tiber; their property confiscated, and their families forbidden to wear mourning: such was the vindictive spirit of the times.

The war in Africa.

It was soon after the death of Caius Gracchus that a war broke out in Africa, which eventually brought the kingdom of Numidia under the dominion of Rome. [17] Massinissa had been succeeded by his son, Micipsa, who died about this time, leaving his kingdom to his two sons, and his nephew, Jugurtha, the latter being a young man of great talent and ambition, as well as a distinguished soldier. [18] He had served with Scipio, in Spain; and Micipsa associated him with his sons, because he thought that by so doing he might prevent a warfare between them, as he had some fears that Jugurtha would aspire to the throne. His precaution, however, was useless; for the prince soon quarrelled with his cousins, and killed one of them, on which the other fled to Rome to seek refuge and assistance. [19] Commissioners were sent out by the senate, with instructions to divide the kingdom equally between the two claimants; but Jugurtha was rich, and bribed these commissioners to give him the most fertile and warlike parts of the country; and as soon as they were gone,

Commissioners sent out by the senate.

he laid siege to Cirta, his cousin's capital, which was surrendered, and the unhappy prince was put to death.

In consequence of this unjustifiable conduct, the Roman senate declared war against Jugurtha, who defended his kingdom with such vigour, that it was necessary to send out the ablest generals against him.

[20]The most distinguished of these was Caius Marius, a man of low birth, who had entered the army as a common soldier, and raised himself by his talents to the rank of a military tribune. He was afterwards elected to the office of Prætor, one of the chief magistrates of the city; and when he had served that office, he was appointed to the government of Spain. It must be remembered that no one could be made governor of a province, unless he had been consul or prætor at Rome. On his return from Spain, Marius went out to Africa, with the consul Metellus, who carried on the war with great success against Jugurtha, and took several towns in Numidia, which were obliged to receive Roman garrisons. These victories, were, however, chiefly owing to Marius, who went to Rome to try for the consulship, and succeeded in getting himself elected, when he was appointed to the chief command in Africa, and returned to supersede Metellus.

Caius Marius.

B.C. 111. War with Jugurtha, king of Numidia.

[21]Jugurtha, assisted by Bocchus, the king of Mauritania, ventured twice to give battle to the Romans, but was both times defeated, and was at last betrayed into their hands by Bocchus, and ended his life in a dungeon at Rome. He had delivered up to Metellus, on a former occasion, 200,000 pounds of silver; and now great treasures were found in his capital.

B.C. 106. Jugurtha taken prisoner.

[22]About this time, Italy was menaced by the approach of a tribe of barbarians from the north of Europe, known by the name of the Cymri, or Cimbrians, who came from those countries which afterwards sent forth the Saxon Conquerors of England. They were of the same race as the

Picts of Scotland. They ravaged a great part of Gaul, and fought several battles in that country with the Romans, who were overwhelmed by their vast numbers, so that two consular armies were completely destroyed.

The Gauls had begun to look upon the Romans as their protectors against the warlike tribes of the north; for the Cimbrians were joined by other nations, and having passed through Gaul, went into Spain, where the people suffered dreadfully, from the havoc they made.

[23] Marius had been elected consul at Rome four successive years, because he was the fittest man to oppose an invasion of the barbarians, in case they should cross the Alps. This at length happened. [24] Innumerable hosts of rude warriors poured across the mountains by two different passes. One of these hordes was intercepted and entirely routed by Marius; but the other effected an entrance into Cisalpine Gaul, now Lombarby, where, for some time, they made frightful ravages; but at length a decisive victory was gained over them by the united forces of the two consuls, Marius and Catalus, and great numbers of them perished on the field; while the few who escaped were glad to take refuge where they could.

B.C. 101. Caius Marius, in his fifth Consulship, defeated the Cimbri.

Part of Gaul made a Roman province.

Marius acquired so much fame by these victories, that the people honoured him as one of the gods, by pouring out libations in his name at their meals.

It was the custom of the Romans to begin their principal meal, and all their great feasts, with prayers and libations; the latter being [25] offerings made to the gods, by pouring out a little wine on the table, and throwing some of the meat into the fire, before they tasted either; and when they wished to pay divine honours to any person, they pronounced his name with those of the gods to whom these offerings were made.

Celebration of victory.

[26] Marius celebrated his victory by a most brilliant triumph, and was rewarded for the services he had

performed by being re-elected to the consulship a sixth time.

[27]The great question which now occupied the ruling classes at Rome, and also created violent factions in the state, was, whether the Italians should be admitted to the Roman franchise. This dispute was very similar to that about the Catholic emancipation, which, years ago, was the cause of much party feeling in Great Britain.

Assassination of Drusus.

[28]Drusus, the tribune, who exerted himself in favour of this cause, was assassinated in his own house, and the perpetrator of the deed was never discovered, which might easily be the case; for in all the residences of the great at Rome there were large halls, lighted only by lamps, in which persons used to assemble to obtain an audience of the master of the house; and it was in a hall of this kind that Drusus was stabbed, as he was walking up and down, talking with the people.

B.C. 90. The Social war began.

[29]Having thus lost their great advocate, the Italians resolved to obtain, by force, the privileges to which they considered themselves entitled; and a civil war ensued, which is known by the name of the Social war, and was carried on for two years in every part of Italy, which was thereby reduced to a most melancholy condition.

[30]At length the senate came to a decision that it would be proper to grant the demands of the Italian people, as formerly urged by the patriotic Gracchus; a measure which, if it had been adopted at the beginning of the war, might have saved a vast deal of misery and bloodshed. They now passed what may be termed the Italian emancipation bill; and from that time all the people of Italy may be regarded as Romans. [31]This event took place eighty-eight years before the Christian era.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who was Tiberius Gracchus? and how did he distinguish himself?
2 Why were his measures opposed?
3 By what tenure were state lands held?
4 How were those who were dispossessed to be compensated?
5 What was the event of the contest?
6 What was the origin of the Gracchi?
7 What became of Tiberius Gracchus?
8 Did the people benefit by the laws?
9 What was the fate of Scipio?
10 What were the acts of Caius Gracchus when tribune?
11 How did he better the condition of the soldiers?
12 What was the pay of a foot soldier?
13 What was the value of an As at this period?
14 How did Gracchus lose his popularity?
15 What was the consequence?
16 Relate the circumstances?
17 Who was Jugurtha?
18 How did he become the sole king of Numidia?
19 Why did the Romans declare war against Jugurtha?
20 Who was the greatest Roman general about this time?
21 What was the result of the war?
22 What happened in Gaul about this time?
23 What measures were adopted at Rome in consequence?
24 How was Italy delivered from the barbarians?
25 What is meant by libations?
26 How was Marius rewarded for his services?
27 What great question now agitated the Roman senate?
28 Who lost his life in the cause?
29 What was the Social war?
30 How was it terminated?
31 When did this event take place?

SULLA AND MARIUS.

Mithridates.

THE Social war had scarcely been brought to a close, when the Romans took occasion to quarrel with [1]Mithridates, king of Pontus, at this time the most powerful monarch of the east.

[2]The kingdom of Pontus formed a part of Syria; but Mithridates, who was quite a young man, had extended his dominions, during the war in Italy, over the Crimea, and the country bordering on the Black Sea, as far as the Ukraine, and the river Dniester. [3]Having made these conquests, he bestowed on his brother the kingdom of Cappadocia, in Asia Minor; but the Romans, jealous of his growing power, interfered, and set up another king in Cappadocia. [4]This gave rise to a war, and two Roman armies were defeated by Mithridates; for these armies were not composed of Romans, but of the effeminate inhabitants of Asia Minor. [5]The victor then proceeded to Greece; and as the Greeks hoped, by his means, to gain their independence, they received him joyfully. Most of the Greek towns in Asia Minor revolted; and all the Romans and Italians in them, amounting to many thousands, were put to death in one day.

Jealousy of the Romans.

The Romans now had sufficient cause to prosecute the war in earnest, and [6]Sulla, a man of high birth, was elected consul, for the purpose of taking the command; for [7]Marius was now seventy years of age. Yet, old as he was, he was desirous of conducting a war that was likely to enrich those who engaged in it; and, moreover, he was jealous of the rising fame of Sulla, who was an accomplished gentleman, as well as a good soldier; whereas Marius was a rough, unlettered warrior, as rude in appearance as in manners.

Civil war broke out in Italy, between the partisans of Marius and Sulla.

[8]Resolved to gain his point, Marius engaged one of the tribunes in his interest, and at length succeeded in getting the command transferred from Sulla to himself; but the soldiers were dissatisfied at this arrangement, and declared they were ready to support their general against his rival; so Sulla determined not to resign the command without a struggle. He selected six legions or regiments, and marched to Rome, where the gates were closed against him. But the gates were very old, and the walls of the city so much

Struggle between Marius and Sulla.

decayed, that in some places it was easy to step over them, so [9]Sulla entered, and proceeeded to the Forum, while Marius, and many of his party, fled.

Caius Marius.

The adventures of the aged warrior, during his exile, are romantic and interesting. [10]One time he was cast ashore on the coast of Italy in a storm, and wandered about the woods till he met with some herdsmen, who knew him, and told him that a party of horse-soldiers was close by, in pursuit of him. He fled again towards the sea, and got on board a vessel, which had scarcely left the shore, when the soldiers galloped up, and called to the sailors to put back, while Marius urged them to sail away with all speed. They did so; but, being afraid of the consequences, soon put him on shore again, and left him. He concealed himself for a time amongst the marshes; but being at length discovered, was cast into a dungeon at Minturnæ, a town in that part of Italy which is now the kingdom of Naples.

The attempt to kill Marius.

An attempt was there made to put him to death secretly, but he frightened the assassin from his purpose, by crying out in a terrible voice, "Would'st thou dare to kill Caius Marius!" and as the magistrates probably regarded his escape as a sign that he was favoured by the gods, they were afraid to do him any harm; so they sent him on board a vessel, which landed him near Carthage, and he bent his steps towards the desolate remains of that once proud city. It was on this occasion that he made the well known reply to the messenger of the Roman governor, who was sent to command him to depart; "Go, tell thy master thou sawest Caius Marius, sitting, an exile, amid the ruins of Carthage!" However, he obeyed the mandate, and retired to a small island to await the progress of events, where he was soon joined by many of his friends.

Sulla in Greece

[11]In the meantime, Sulla had proceeded to Greece, to carry on the war with Mithridates, who was assisted by the numerous pirates that infested the Mediterranean Sea;

and during his absence, [12]two consuls of different factions were elected at Rome, Cinna and Octavius; the former being a friend of Marius, the latter attached to Sulla. [13]Many scenes of violence occurred in consequence, till at length Cinna was expelled by the senate, and Sulla's party, headed by Octavius, for a time maintained the ascendancy. But Cinna raised an army in Campania, and being joined by Marius, whom he had recalled from exile, they marched together to Rome, and laid siege to the city, which they blockaded in such a manner that no provisions could be taken into it, so that the inhabitants were in danger of being starved. In this distress, the senators were driven to make terms with Cinna, by restoring him to the consulship, and agreeing to the recall of Marius; and the gates were opened to the victors, who entered the city with a determination to set no bounds to their revenge.

Expulsion of Cinna.

[14]The first measure adopted by Marius, was to rid himself by assassination of his opponent Octavius, and to take his place as consul, with the sole object of destroying those whom he looked upon as his enemies. Every day numbers of murders were committed by a band of ruffians, who formed his body guard, and were employed to search for and put to death such as were obnoxious to him; and thus many of the most distinguished men in the city were murdered openly in the streets, or in their own houses.

Marius chosen Consul for the 7th time. His death.

[15]In sixteen days, however, Marius died, and the massacre was stopped; for Cinna had grown tired of so much bloodshed, and would willingly have put an end to it before.

[16]In the meantime, Sulla had driven Mithridates from Greece, and had gone to Asia, to pursue the war there. [17]Most of his personal friends had perished in the massacre at Rome; his own house had been pulled down, his property confiscated, and his family driven into exile. For these injuries he meditated a terrible revenge; but he de-

Sulla carried on a war with Greece, and took Athens.

ferred his purpose, till he had brought the war in Asia to a close, which was not till [18] three years after the death of Marius, [19] when he concluded a peace with Mithridates, who was obliged to surrender all the conquests he had made, and confine himself to his own kingdom of Pontus; while the revolted cities in Asia Minor, where the Romans had been massacred, were obliged to pay down at once, five years' tribute, besides a heavy contribution towards the expense of the war, by which they were almost ruined.

Peace concluded.

Sulla now returned with his army to Italy, where he was joined by great numbers of partisans, amongst whom was [20] a young man named Pompeius, afterwards known as Pompey the Great, who had distinguished himself by defeating some of the generals of Marius.

Civil warfare.

[21] Italy was once more a prey to all the horrors of civil warfare. [22] Sulla was opposed by young Marius, the son of the deceased general, who had been made consul, and took the command in this war, which lasted [23] nearly two years, and caused abundance of misery throughout the country; for almost all the Italian cities took a part in it, and some of them were totally destroyed; while in others, the wretched inhabitants were put to the sword.

[24] The decisive battle was fought at the gates of Rome, and won by Sulla, who entered the city as a conqueror, and used the power given him by this victory [25] to take a cruel revenge for the barbarous treatment of his partisans by Marius.

Having returned to Italy Sulla renewed the civil war, entered Rome, and caused a multitude of persons to be put to death.

His first act was to order the execution of eight thousand prisoners, who were led out to the Campus Marius, and deliberately cut to pieces by the soldiers. [26] He then prepared a proscription list; that is, he wrote down the names of all persons who were known to have adhered to the opposite party, and set a price on their heads; so that any one might kill them with impunity, and bring their heads to Rome, to claim the reward.

[27]Among the names he designed to place on this fatal list, was that of Julius Cæsar, who was then quite a young man, and had taken no part in public affairs, but was looked upon as an enemy by Sulla, because [28]he was the nephew of the elder Marius, who had married his aunt, Julia, therefore it was natural to suppose he was attached to that party. [29]His life was spared, however, at the intercession of some persons of consequence, especially the Vestal Virgins, who pleaded for him, because he was one of the priests; for the priesthood at Rome was not a separate class, but the members were elected like the magistrates; and whenever a vacancy occurred, any one whose station in life rendered him eligible for such an office, was at liberty to become a candidate; nor did his election disqualify him for holding any other office, either civil or military.

The Vestal Virgins.

It is said that many wicked persons took advantage of the proscription, to get the names of their private enemies, and even their creditors, put upon the list, by giving false information against them; and as this list was exhibited publicly in the Forum, there was little chance of escape for the proscribed, unless they could contrive to leave the country in disguise. Those who were fortunate enough to do so, fled to Spain, where the Marian party was the strongest; but all their property was confiscated, so that their families were reduced to beggary.

Evils of the proscription.

[30]It was not only at Rome, but in all the cities of Italy, that the proscription was acted upon; so that, what with these murders, for they deserve no better name, and the blood that had been shed during the war, the population of the country must have been very much diminished.

Diminution of the population.

[31]Sulla was invested with supreme power, by being created dictator for an indefinite period. This office had been discontinued for a hundred and twenty years, and was now revived in all its power and dignity; and the new

dictator appeared in public with twenty-four lictors, and a strong guard. [32] He made several changes in the laws. and founded military colonies in various parts of Italy, which [33] were quite different from the Roman colonies of former times, being instituted as a provision for veteran soldiers; so that when a legion was dismissed from service, a certain town, perhaps one that had been nearly depopulated in the wars, was given to them, with its territory, and they took the place of its former citizens.

The foundation of military colonies.

[34] The dictator filled up many vacancies made in the senate by the proscription, not only with knights, or Plebeian nobles, but with centurions, who were the captains of the foot soldiers, and usually men of low birth, who had risen from the ranks. [35] Then, to make up in some measure for the numbers of freemen who had fallen in the wars, he gave liberty to the slaves of the proscribed, amounting to about ten thousand, and enrolled them in the tribes, which entitled them to the rights of free citizens. All these, as well as the soldiers of the colonies, were entirely devoted to his interest; so that he might probably have retained the supreme power as long as he lived, if he had chosen to do so; but instead of that, [36] he resigned his office, no one knew why, at the end of two years, and withdrew entirely from public life. From that time he lived like a private country gentleman, and wrote his own memoirs, a work that is referred to as an authority for the history of these times. He died in the year following his abdication, and his funeral obsequies were performed with extraordinary magnificence.

B.C. 79. After holding the office of Perpetual Dictator, about three years, he resigned it.

B.C. 78. Death of Sulla.

[37] Marius, the younger, had been killed at the time when Sulla gained the battle at Rome; but even the loss of their leaders did not put an end to the hostilities of the two factions, particularly in Spain, where the civil war was carried on for six years after the death of Sulla.

[26] The partisans of Marius had always maintained the

ascendancy in Spain; and all the exiles who escaped from Sulla's proscription, had fled for refuge to that country, [39] where a Roman general named Sertorius, a man of a very noble character, took the lead; and by his excellent conduct, gained the love and respect, not only of his own countrymen, but of the Spaniards also.

Sertorius established an independent government in Spain.

The Romans were not at this time looked upon altogether as the enemies of the Spaniards, for the custom of sending legions to remain for years in the provinces, had naturally led to a friendly intercourse between them and the people, and a great number of Roman soldiers had married Spanish women, consequently their children, who thus belonged to both nations, were not the enemies of either.

The formation of the three hundred senate.

Sertorius was anxious to establish a perfect union between the two nations; and with that view, he [40] formed a senate of three hundred members, some of whom were proscribed Romans, some noble Spaniards; and he instituted an academy for the sons of natives of high rank, who were taught the Greek and Latin languages, and wore the Roman costume. This academy was in the town of Osca, now Huesca in the province of Arragon, and the chief motive for its establishment seems to have been to secure the fidelity of the native nobles, by collecting their sons into a place where they might be detained as hostages in case of need.

At Rome, the friends of Sulla still formed the ruling party, and carried on war against Sertorius, for some time without success; till at length, being alarmed at his increasing power, the senate gave the command to Pompey, [41] who was sent with a fresh army to Spain, and finally succeeded in restoring the authority of the government, and terminating the civil war, which had lasted six years from the death of Sulla.

When the fickle Spaniards found that fortune was turning against Sertorius, many of the towns deserted

Pupils sold for slaves.

him, in consequence of which he sold, for slaves, all the pupils assembled in his academy at Huesca; an act that has caused a sad stain to rest on his memory. Soon after this, he was himself assassinated at a banquet, and the war was speedily brought to a close. Pompey then returned to Rome, where he was made consul, together with Crassus, [42]a man of immense wealth, who had acquired some importance as a general, by putting down a formidable insurrection of the slaves in Italy, which had all the character of a civil war.

Sertorius assassinated in Spain. B.C. 72.

Insurrection of gladiators, &c. in Italy, under Spartacus.

The circumstances are these. [43]A number of gladiators, headed by one Spartacus, had escaped from a fencing school in Capua, and concealed themselves on Mount Vesuvius, which was then very difficult of access, where they at first formed a band of robbers; but being joined by vast numbers of runaway slaves, they grew into an army, and carried on a war against the government for two years; in the course of which, they took and plundered many towns, ravaged the country, and gained some victories over the consular armies. [44]They had large establishments for the manufacture of arms, and actually thought they might conquer and rule all Italy. [45]Spartacus was at length defeated by Crassus, and his whole army destroyed; for those who were not killed in battle, were made prisoners and put to death.

Condition of the south of Italy.

[46]The south of Italy never recovered the prosperity it had enjoyed before this war; for in many parts, where there had been good towns, and a free population of peasantry, the places dwindled down to poor ruinous-looking hamlets, and the country around them, which had consisted of small but richly cultivated farms, was formed into large estates, laid out chiefly in pasture for cattle and horses.

Strongholds of pirates.

[47]About this time, Italy was more than ever annoyed by the pirates, who were encouraged by Mithridates, and possessed a number of small fortified places on the coast of

Cilicia, a maritime province of Asia; as well as on the coast of Africa. They had hundreds of warlike vessels on the Mediterranean, and like the Danes of later times, were accustomed to land suddenly on any unguarded spot, and carry off whatever they could seize.

The small maritime towns were frequently destroyed by these ruffians, and persons of distinction dragged away to their boats, and conveyed to some of their numerous castles, where they were kept in confinement, until money was sent for their ransom. In short, their depredations were carried on to such an extent, that [48] it was resolved at Rome to commence a regular war against them, and the chief command was given to Pompey, who embarked with a large fleet, for the purpose of destroying all the piratical states and fortresses on the shores of the Mediterranean.[49] He conducted this war with so much ability, that in the course of a few months the sea was cleared of the ships of the ancient buccaneers, most of their strongholds were demolished, and they were obliged to submit to the conqueror, who settled them in colonies in Cilicia, and the desolated parts of Greece, where they could be watched and kept in check. The wealth of Rome was greatly increased by the treasures taken from the corsairs, and a splendid triumph was decreed to Pompey, on his return from this fortunate expedition. This happened in the year 67 B.C.

Pompey destroyed the pirates who infested the Mediterranean sea.

[50] In the meantime, the war had been renewed with Mithridates, and many rich eastern cities had been captured and plundered by the Romans. [51] This war was carried on successfully for some time, by a famous general named Lucullus, [52] whose haughty manners, however, had displeased some persons of influence, who brought a charge against him, that occasioned his recall in the year following the defeat of the pirates; and Pompey was invested with the chief command in Asia.

War with Mithridates, King of Pontus.

[53] Lucullus is celebrated for the introduction of Asiatic

Introduction of luxuries.

luxuries among the Romans. His own wealth was enormous, and he spent vast sums in building magnificent villas, and laying out extensive gardens. It was he who first brought cherry-trees into Europe, from Pontus, and transplanted many other fruits from the east, such as damsons, peaches, lemons, and walnuts.

Water-mills.

[54] It is probable that water-mills were first known to the Romans about this time, as the first notice of such a mill is of one that was constructed by Mithridates, in his capital of Cabira. Lucullus also brought home a great many books, and formed, at a vast expense, one of the first grand libraries on record at Rome. This cabinet of literature remained the private property of the collector, who, however, afforded Grecian philosophers, and others of his learned contemporaries, free admission to his library. To Julius Cæsar, belongs the honour of having first proposed the formation of a public library at Rome; and his sudden and violent death, having prevented him from executing his design, it was adopted by his nephew and successor, Augustus Cæsar. By his order, Asinius Pollio, one of the most learned men of his time, placed in the Temple of Liberty, on Mount Aventine, a library of manuscripts, expressly for the use of the public. The Octavian, Palatine and public libraries were subsequently founded, under the auspices of the same emperor.

Mithridates vanquished. B.C. 66.

[55] Pompey went into Asia, where Mithridates in one battle lost all that he had gained, and fled across the Caucasus, a chain of mountains, between the Black and Caspian seas. Pompey followed him as far as Georgia, and in all the countries that he passed through, the princes did homage as vassals of Rome. It was now, that the city of Jerusalem, the great capital of the Jews, was besieged and taken by the Romans, and the whole of Syria reduced to the condition of a Roman province.

Syria was, at that time, the richest and most flourishing

country in the world; but its cities are now gone to decay, and great part of the country is a desert. Judæa, since called Palestine, situated to the south of Syria, was the country of the Jews, once a great and powerful nation.

Civil war at Jerusalem.

[56]At the time when Pompey entered Judæa, there was civil war at Jerusalem, on account of a dispute between the two princes, Aristobulus and Hyrcanus, as to which should succeed to the high priesthood. It must be understood that the high priests of the Jews were also their sovereigns, until the time of Herod the Great, who was made king by Mark Antony, after the death of Pompey. Hyrcanus and Aristobulus applied to Pompey to settle their dispute, who decided in favour of Hyrcanus, and as Aristobulus resisted this decision, he made him prisoner, and laid siege to Jerusalem, the gates of which were soon opened to him; but the Temple was bravely defended for three months, when it was taken by storm, on the day of a solemn fast. It is said that twelve thousand Jews fell on this memorable occasion.

Pompey besieged and took Jerusalem.

Hyrcanus was then invested with the dignity of high priest, but the Romans were from that time masters of Jerusalem as well as of all [57]Syria; which latter country was then converted into a province of the empire, and a tribute imposed on the people, in the form of a land-tax. A Roman governor was appointed over every chief city, with a garrison of soldiers to support his authority, and the collection of the revenues was farmed, in the manner before mentioned, by the Publicans.

Death of Mithridates.

[58]Mithridates had died during the siege of Jerusalem, so that the war in the east was now at an end, and Pompey returned to Rome with immense treasures, and many captives of rank, to increase the glory of his triumph, the splendour of which exceeded that of any former one; while the money brought into the treasury amounted to a much larger sum than had been acquired by any previous

War in the east at an end.

wars. As a reward for these services, a decree was passed by the senate, that the conqueror should be permitted to wear a crown of laurel at all public festivals.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who was Mithridates?
2 How far did his kingdom extend?
3 How was he involved in war with the Romans?
4 To which party did victory at first incline?
5 What nation joined the eastern monarch?
6 Who was Sulla?
7 What gave rise to the enmity between Sulla and Marius?
8 How was the strike commenced?
9 Which was triumphant?
10 What befel Marius?
11 How did the war proceed?
12 How was a civil war at Rome occasioned?
13 What were the principal events of this war?
14 How did Marius act on his return?
15 How was Rome delivered from his tyranny?
16 What success had attended Sulla?
17 How was he concerned in the late events at Rome?
18 When was the war in Asia ended?
19 What was its result?
20 Who was a distinguished partisan of Sulla?
21 What followed the return of Sulla?
22 Who was the leader of the opposite faction?
23 How long was the civil war continued in Italy?
24 How was it decided?
25 How did the conqueror use his success?
26 What was the famous proscription of Sulla?
27 What celebrated individual was in danger of being proscribed?
28 Why was he treated as an enemy by Sulla?
29 How was he saved?
30 Did the proscription extend beyond Rome?
31 How was the power of Sulla augmented?
32 By whom were military colonies instituted?
33 What was the nature of these colonies?
34 What changes were made in the senate?

Questions on the chapter.

35 How was the free population recruited?
36 How did Sulla close his career?
37 Where was the civil war still carried on?
38 Which party had the ascendancy in Spain?
39 Who was Sertorius?
40 How did he endeavour to conciliate the Spaniards?
41 Who put an end to the war in Spain?
42 Who was Crassus?
43 What gave rise to the insurrection?
44 What was the object of the insurgents?
45 How was the revolt suppressed?
46 What were the consequences of this war?
47 Who were the chief foes of Italy at this period?
48 What measures were adopted for their suppression?
49 How did Pompey succeed in this expedition?
50 What great war had been renewed meanwhile?
51 Who was Lucullus?
52 By whom was he superseded?
53 How did Lucullus render his name famous?
54 Where did the Romans first meet with a water-mill?
55 What was the success of Pompey in Asia?
56 How did Jerusalem become subject to the Romans?
57 What was the condition of Syria after this conquest?
58 How was the war in the east brought to a close?

MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND ARTS OF THE ROMANS,

IN THE

CENTURY PRECEDING THE CHRISTIAN ERA.

Social habits before the Christian era.

It has already been stated, that the wars in the east had been the means of introducing into Italy a far more luxurious style of living than had ever been known before. Most men of wealth and consequence had large houses at Rome, and superb villas in different parts of the country, where they usually passed the summer. The houses of people of rank were built, at this period, on a very large scale, and adorned with columns, statues and pictures. The outside was generally of brick, for marble was not

much used in building till the time of Augustus Cæsar, except for ornament. [1]The best houses were usually built around three sides of an open court, so that the entrance stood back from the street, and the door opened into a hall or vestibule, which led to [2]the Atrium, a large room used for the reception of visitors, in which the ancestral images were placed. It had a reservoir for water in the middle, and was lighted by an aperture in the roof, from which most of the smaller rooms on the ground floor received their light, as few of them had windows looking to the street. The rooms in the upper part of the house, however, had windows, that closed with shutters, curtains, or network, for the Romans did not use window glass till a later period; but they appeared to have had, at this time,[3] a transparent stone, first found in Spain, that could be split into thin leaves of sufficient size for window panes. This stone was called lapis specularis, and is supposed to have been the same substance known to us by the name of talc.[a]

Roman houses.

Interior of Roman houses.

[4]The rooms were usually warmed by charcoal burned in portable brasiers; but in the reign of the emperor Nero, an improvement was made, by affixing tubes to the walls, which were heated from a furnace below, as is now the custom in Russia. [5]The floors were seldom boarded, but in the best houses were of stone, marble, or mosaic work; and in common dwellings, were generally of tile or brick. The walls were mostly painted in fresco, with figures and scenery, and the ceilings of great houses often adorned with ivory carving, and fine gilding.

Domus.

[6]A house, inhabited by a single family, was called Domus; but the generality of the houses at Rome were built for the accommodation of several families, each of whom occupied one floor, and a house of this kind was distinguished by the name of Insula.

a Annals of Commerce.

Roman villas

The magnificence of the Romans was chiefly displayed in the decorations of their villas, which were mostly built in the eastern style, with galleries and open saloons, adorned with paintings and statues, and surrounded with extensive parks and gardens.

[7]The taste for ornamented villas was brought from the east, by Lucullus, who spent vast sums in erecting country houses, and laying out gardens on a magnificent scale. [8]It was he who first made general the custom of reclining at table on couches, during a repast, which was afterwards adopted by both sexes, and became a universal fashion among the higher classes; but, at first, the ladies still preferred sitting at table while the men reclined.

The couches were so constructed, that three persons could recline on one of them, without incommoding each other: the children sat at a separate table at the lower end of the room.

The principal meal.

[9]The principal meal of the Romans was called supper, although it began about three or four o'clock in the afternoon. It was, therefore, customary to invite friends to supper, not to dinner, which was merely a luncheon, taken about noon, whereas the supper among the rich and great was usually a very costly and splendid entertainment. The Romans always bathed before supper.

Bathing was a luxury enjoyed by all classes of people at Rome, as there were public baths for the use of those who could not afford to have them in their own houses, and the fee was so trifling, that the poorest people were able to use them frequently, and little children were admitted without payment: a bell was rung to give notice when the baths were ready.

Public baths.

The public baths, at this peroid, were chiefly for the poor and middling classes; but in the time of the emperors there were very splendid baths for the rich, which will be described hereafter.

Roman gardens.

[10]The Romans were very fond of gardens, and their horticulture had been greatly improved by the importation of many kinds of flowers, trees, and shrubs, from the east. In large gardens, there were usually long lines of trees, forming shady walks; and flower beds, often raised so as to form terraces; but their flowers were few, in comparison with those known to us, the chief sorts being the rose, lily, violet, narcissus, amaranth, iris, and some others. They do not appear to have had hot-houses or conservatories, till the first century of our era; but flowers and plants were sometimes kept in the house, or on the roofs, which were often constructed with ornamental terraces, so that the inmates could walk out upon them to take the air.

Adornment of gardens.

The gardens were generally adorned with statues, vases, fountains, and summer houses; and there were some that were open to the public, like the gardens of Kensington, or Hampton Court. Those of Lucullus at Rome, and the Portico, or Arcade, called the Gardens of Pompey, shaded by lines of plane-trees, and embellished with beautiful fountains, and other decorations, were among the most remarkable.

[11]The ornamental gardeners were reckoned among the highest class of slaves; that is, they were above those who worked in the fields, or tended the cattle.

Domestic slaves.

It is said, that some of the rich families employed as many as three or four hundred domestic slaves; but this number probably included those who were employed in agriculture, and they must have been numerous, for most gentlemen's houses in the country had farms attached to them, which were cultivated by their slaves, who also made the wine and oil, from the produce of the vineyards, and olive plantations. These farm servants slept in clusters of little cells in the large farm-yards or courts that contained the cellars, granaries, and stables; and there

was always a large dungeon underground, where refractory slaves were confined, and these were brought out to work in chains. Farming.

The Romans were excellent farmers, and their implements of husbandry were similar in most respects to those now in use. They usually ploughed the land three times for each crop; the first time, to cut up the old roots that remained in the ground, for which purpose they used the coulter, a sharp instrument, fastened to the pole, before the plough-share; the second ploughing rendered the earth fit to receive the seed; the third threw the mould over it, by means of boards fixed to the share-beam, and also made furrows between the ridges. The plough was drawn by oxen, and guided by a handle behind, held by the ploughman. Sometimes, after the seed was sown, it was covered by harrowing, the harrow having iron teeth, and being drawn, like the plough, by oxen.

Besides their farm servants, the wealthy Romans had slaves attached to their household, who exercised almost all kinds of trades and professions. Farm servants and slaves.

[12]Every domestic establishment had an apparatus for the manufacture of cloth, which was carried on principally by female slaves, under the superintendence of the mistress, who, with her daughters, usually assisted in the ornamental parts of the work. The loom in general use was a simple upright frame, standing on two feet.

There were dyers and fullers, too, among the slaves, although these trades, as well as most others, were practised by the lower orders at Rome, and in many of the large towns of Italy. The fullers or scourers were a numerous class, and supplied the place of our laundresses; for, as the garments worn by the Romans were chiefly made of wool, they were always sent, when dirty, to the fullers to be cleaned. Dyers and fullers.

[13]Very little alteration had taken place in the general

General costume.

costume of the people, who had not yet adopted the use of silk or linen, but wore the woollen toga and tunic as in former times. It had, however, become common to wear over the toga a large dark cloak, called lacerna, which usually had a hood to it, so that the head might be covered at night or in bad weather.

The Roman ladies of this period displayed more gaiety in their attire than was permitted in earlier times, for although the form of the dress was the same, they wore a variety of colours, and ornamented their tunics, and stolas or gowns, with fringes, flounces, and elegant borders woven in the cloth. They endeavoured to improve their beauty by rouge and patches, and bestowed great attention on the arrangement of the hair, which was subject to changes of

Roman ladies.

fashion. About the time of which we are now speaking, it seems to have been the mode to curl it with irons in rows one above another to a great height, and these were kept in place by large pins of ivory or gold, the back hair being tied up in a net. Some adorned their heads with strings of pearls, others with garlands of flowers or coloured ribbons; and every woman of rank had a female slave, whose sole duty was to dress her hair.

Their mirrors were [14]made of polished steel or brass, a few only being of glass.

They used parasols abroad, as a protection from the sun; but the parasol of a lady was held over her by a slave, unless her suitor chose to perform that service, which was considered a great mark of attention.

Superstitions.

The Romans believed that some days were more lucky than others for the celebration of marriages. [15]Girls were usually bethrothed while children, and married at an early age; but their position in society, after marriage, was much superior to that of the Greek women; for the latter were the mere slaves of their husbands, like the women of eastern countries, and confined to certain apartments;

while a Roman lady was complete mistress of the whole household, as English ladies are.

Marriage customs.

The usual dress of a bride was a long white robe, with a purple fringe, and a bright yellow veil. Her shoes also were yellow.

A particular kind of bridal cake was made on some occasions by the vestal virgins, and carried before the bride in the procession, which took place in the evening, and was attended by the friends and relatives of the parties. The door of the bridegroom's house was ornamented with festoons of flowers, and the lady was lifted over the threshold, that she might not touch it with her foot, which would have been regarded as an evil omen. She carried a distaff and spindle with her to her new abode, where, on her arrival, she was presented with the keys, as a sign that the management of the household affairs was given into her charge.

Celebration of weddings.

The company then partook of an entertainment provided by the husband; so that, instead of the breakfast customary among us, the Romans celebrated their weddings with a supper.

It was very usual, at all private entertainments, for the host to engage professional singers, dancers, and actors, to amuse his guests. The Romans were particularly fond of theatrical exhibitions of all kinds, and [16]they had, at this period, some very good actors, amongst whom was the celebrated Roscius, who was the favourite performer at Rome, in the time of Pompey the Great.

Theatres.

[17]It was not till towards the close of the Republic, that there were any regular theatres for dramatic performances at Rome, although they were not unknown in Italy, where most of the Greek towns could boast of at least one handsome stone theatre.

When a play was to be acted at Rome, it had been the custom to erect a temporary stage for the occasion; but about the time of which we are now speaking, very hand-

some wooden theatres were built, and decorated with great splendour. [18] The first stone theatre at Rome was built by Pompey, in the year 55 B.C. about six years after his return from Asia.

The first stone theatre.

The Roman theatres were much larger than ours, and the scenery and decorations on a more magnificent scale; but the buildings were open at the top, and the performances took place in the day time. The spectators, in the time of the emperors, frequently wore caps, to shield them from the sun.

Greek tragedies were often performed at Rome, for Greek was, at that time, very generally spoken among the higher classes; and all people of rank and fortune sent their sons to Greece, to complete their education. The amphitheatres, with their barbarous exhibitions, were as popular as ever; there being no less than eight in the city of Rome, to which vast numbers of lions, for the combats, were sent from Africa every year.

Greek tragedies.

Public entertainments were always given at the expense of wealthy individuals, who made them the means of obtaining great offices; as, for example, if a man wanted to be made consul, he would exhibit a show of gladiators, a combat of wild beasts, or perhaps a play or a pantomime to the people, to induce them to vote for him; and thus Pompey, being anxious to increase his popularity, opened his theatre with gymnastic games and musical entertainments.

Public entertainments.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the Chapter.

1 How were the Roman houses uilt?
2 What was the Atrium?
3 What was the substitute for window glass?
4 How were the rooms warmed?
5 Describe the floors, walls, and ceilings?
6 What was the difference between Domus and Insula?
7 What style of building was introduced by Lucullus?

Questions on the Chapter.

8 How did the Romans take their meals?
9 Which was the principal meal?
10 How was the horticulture of the Romans improved?
11 To what class did the gardeners belong?
12 How was the manufacture of cloth carried on?
13 What was the general costume of this period?
14 What mirrors were used by the Romans?
15 What was the position of married women in society?
16 Who was the most celebrated Roman actor, and when did he flourish?
17 When were regular theatres first built at Rome?
18 By whom was the first stone theatre erected?

POMPEY AND CÆSAR.

Catiline's conspiracy.

[1] WHILE Pompey was in Asia, a dangerous conspiracy had been formed at Rome, by a nobleman of bad character and ruined fortunes, named Catiline, who had engaged in the plot many persons of high rank, and of both sexes. [2] The object was to effect a revolution, by murdering the consuls and chief senators, and seizing on the government.

So many people were concerned, and so large a force held in readiness to assist them, that if the plot had not been discovered, the city would probably have been destroyed, as part of the plan was to set it on fire in several places at once, and then to take advantage of the confusion to assassinate the destined victims.

Cicero.

[3] One of the consuls at the time was the celebrated orator and writer, Cicero. [4] He was an eminent lawyer, or what we should call a barrister; and had first brought himself into notice, when a young man, by gaining an important lawsuit for Roscius the actor, on which occasion he made so eloquent a speech, that he was regarded as one of the first orators of the day.

Lawyers' fees.

[5] Lawyers did not take fees at that period, but the law was studied by young

men of high families to qualify them for offices under the government.

The house of an eminent lawyer was often beset before day-break by a crowd of persons who came to consult him about their affairs, and the young men who were his pupils, attended to listen to the advice he gave them. [6]In after times, under the emperors, lawyers were permitted to take fees, and then the law became a regular profession, as it is now.

[7]Cicero, as before-mentioned, was consul in the year of Catiline's conspiracy: the plot was revealed to him, and although many of the senators themselves were engaged in it, he adopted such prompt and active measures, that it was frustrated, and some of the principal conspirators put to death: Catiline escaped, and collected an army of about twelve thousand men, many of whom were slaves; but being forced to give battle to the troops sent in pursuit of him, he fell in the action.

B.C. 62. Catiline raised a civil war, and was killed in battle.

[8]There were many nobles at Rome, who were suspected of being concerned in Catiline's conspiracy, although the fact was never proved against them, and amongst these was Julius Cæsar, who was at that time serving the office of Prætor,[9] a dignity resembling that of our Lord Mayor. He was also Chief Pontiff, and was otherwise a man of high consideration at Rome, being a descendant of one of the oldest Patrician families.

While Sulla lived, he had devoted himself to study, but after the death of that tyrant, he obtained a military appointment in Spain, where he remained for some years, and on his return to Rome was elected prætor, being then about thirty-six years of age.

Julius Cæsar.

Julius Cæsar was a man of great and varied talents, which were highly cultivated; he possessed a strong mind, united to an amiable disposition, great powers of observation, and an excellent memory. He was one of the most

elegant prose writers that Rome ever produced; and, in short, was an accomplished scholar, a man of science, and a successful soldier.

Catiline elected consul.

[10] About three years after Catiline's conspiracy, he was elected consul, and there is no doubt that he then meditated the ambitious project of raising himself to that absolute power which he at length attained. With this view, he had formed a league with [11] Pompey and Crassus, who were then the leading men in the state; and as [12] all three agreed to support each other's measures in the senate, they formed so powerful a party that they were sure to carry every thing their own way.

B.C. 60. The first Triumvirate, or confederacy between Julius Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus.

[13] Pompey and Crassus had both been consuls; so when Cæsar had completed his year of office, they illegally divided the government of the provinces among them, Pompey taking Spain; Crassus, Syria; and Cæsar, Cisalpine Gaul, with Illyricum, a country east of the Adriatic sea.

[14] Cæsar was not the only one who aspired to absolute power, for Pompey had the same desire, and, therefore, sent a lieutenant to represent him in Spain, whilst he remained at Rome, to take advantage of any circumstances that might favour his views. [15] Cæsar and Crassus repaired to their provinces, and the latter, having undertaken an unjust war against the Parthians in Asia, in the hope of increasing his riches, was punished for his avarice, by being made prisoner and put to death.

The state of the city of Rome.

In the meantime, the city of Rome was in a complete state of anarchy. [16] Pompey was doing all in his power to raise himself to the head of the state; and there were other individuals who created popular disturbances for their own advantage. [17] Among these was a tribune, named Clodius, a bold, seditious man, who, when he wanted to pass any law that was likely to be opposed, had recourse to the assistance of a body of men called operatives, who were the

lowest mechanics of the city, with whom he had made himself popular, by restoring their clubs, or guild companies, which had been suppressed. A day seldom passed without some conflict taking place in the streets, in which lives were lost, especially when there was to be an election.

The rivalry of Clodius and Milo.

[18] At length, it happened that Clodius and a certain Patrician, named Milo, were rival candidates for the prætorship. One day, they chanced to meet on a high road, each being attended by a band of armed men, as it was not considered safe to travel without an escort in such turbulent times. They fought, and Clodius was killed. [19] The mob, in revenge, carried his body into the senate house, and tore up the seats to make a funereal pile, which they set on fire, and the building was burnt down. The riots continued for several days, during which many houses were plundered and destroyed, and many lives lost. Such was the state of Rome, when Pompey was again made consul.

B.C. 58. Cæsar's wars in Gaul, &c.

[20] In the meantime, Cæsar was occupied in contemplating the conquest of Gaul, the south of which was already under the Roman dominion. The Gauls consisted of many isolated nations, each governed by its own chief; but the great masses of the people were serfs, who cultivated the land; and although they were employed in the wars, they did not fight like freemen, for they were not fighting for their liberty, and it little mattered to them which party conquered, since they could not be reduced to a worse condition than they were in before.

[21] By a long series of wars, Cæsar reduced the whole of Gaul to subjection; but like all conquerors, he was guilty of many acts of cruelty, particularly towards some of the German tribes, with whom he came in contact.

B.C. 55. His first invasion of Britain.

[22] It was during these wars, that he invaded Britain, [23] an expedition by which he gained but little fame or profit, as that part of the country where he landed was

very poor, and yielded no treasures such as the Roman generals were in the habit of carrying home with them from the wars.

The tin mines of Cornwall had been the great objects of attraction to the Carthaginians, in their trading intercourse with the Britons; but Cæsar did not know of these mines; and he lost nearly all his fleet, in consequence of the ignorance of the Roman sailors, who did not know how to manage their awkward vessels, which were not unlike our coal barges, in the strong tides of the British channel. [24] However, Cæsar defeated a body of the natives, and received their submission; but he made no permanent conquests, although he went a second time, and advanced along the banks of the Thames, nearly as far as Windsor.

The tin mines of Cornwall.

On this occasion he remained about four months in the island, being chiefly engaged in learning as much as he could of the habits and manners of the people.

B.C. 54. Second invasion.

The British princes again made submission, and agreed to pay tribute, for the sake, no doubt, of getting rid of the intruders; but it does not appear that the tribute was ever paid, or that any means were taken to enforce it. In fact, the state of things at Rome, and Cæsar's own views in consequence, must have made him attach but little importance to the subjection of an island of barbarians at so remote a distance.

[25] The departure of Cæsar from Britain was hastened by news of an insurrection in Gaul, where the overbearing conduct of the soldiers had roused the people to rebellion. The whole country was in arms, and in some places the Romans had all been massacred. [26] The return of Cæsar only seemed to increase the fury of the Gauls, who made most desperate efforts to recover their independence, and numerous hosts fell in the struggle; but they were completely subdued in the end, and Gaul was formed into a Roman province.

Departure of Cæsar from Britain.

[27] Pompey had now become jealous of the fame of Cæsar; and as the time was approaching when the latter was to resign his government and the command of the army, Pompey exerted all his influence to destroy his power.

Cæsar and the consulship.

[28] Cæsar was desirous of standing again for the consulship, but he also wanted a triumph for his victories in Gaul. Now, it was difficult to attain both these objects, because it was the custom for the general who intended to offer himself for consul, to disband his army, and enter the city as a private person. Cæsar demanded to have this custom set aside, and wanted to be elected consul without going to Rome at all, and to return with his army after the election, to celebrate his triumph, as he did not choose to trust himself in the city without his soldiers.

Cæsar and Pompey.

At length he consented to resign his command, on condition that Pompey should do so too; but Pompey refused, and as each had his partisans in the senate, the affair gave rise to a violent discussion, in which Pompey's party carried their point, and Cæsar received orders to give up his command. Indignant at this treatment, after his long and hard services in Gaul, he resolved to return to Rome as an enemy to the faction by which the republic was then governed; and his soldiers declared they would stand by him in the enterprise. But it was a serious thing to kindle the flames of civil warfare in his own country; and it is related, that when he reached the confines of his province, he paused on the bank of a small stream, called the Rubicon, which divided the Roman part of Italy from Cisalpine Gaul, debating in his mind whether he should pass it or not; but he had gone too far to recede with safety; so he gave the word to proceed, and crossed the bridge, followed by his army. Hence arises the saying, when any one has taken an important step that cannot be recalled, "He has passed the Rubicon."

[29] Pompey was supplied by the senate with troops and

money to defend the state against Cæsar, who had been joined by the celebrated [30] Marcus Antonius, commonly called Mark Antony, who was a man of some distinction, nearly related to Cæsar, and held a high rank in the army, but was unprincipled, extravagant, and fond of pleasure; and became one of the most conspicuous, though not one of the greatest characters of the times. It was not, however, till after the death of Julius Cæsar, that he acquired his greatest notoriety.

B.C. 49. The civil war commenced between Cæsar and Pompey.

Marcus Antonius.

[31] The civil war that now commenced was not a war of the republic, but was, in reality, a contest between Cæsar and Pompey for the dominion of the Roman Empire. [32] Pompey retreated with his army to Greece, while Cæsar went to Rome, where [33] he assumed the chief authority, and took possession of all the gold and silver in the treasury, that he might have plenty of money to pay his soldiers during the approaching contest. This was an unlawful act, and was opposed by one of the tribunes, who refused to give up the keys; but Cæsar told him that this was no time to talk about laws; and as the keys were not produced, he sent for a smith to break open the treasury, threatening to kill any one who should endeavour to prevent him.

The contest between Cæsar and Pompey.

[34] Having thus the means of carrying on the war, he led his army through Gaul into Spain, for it was there that Pompey had most power and influence, his veteran army being stationed in that country. Cæsar therefore thought it would be good policy to make himself master of Spain before he attacked Pompey in Greece, as the latter would then have no place of refuge in case of being conquered.

[35] I have already mentioned the trading city of Marseilles, which was inhabited chiefly by Greek merchants. These people refused to admit the Roman army into their town; therefore Cæsar left a part of his troops to besiege the city, while he proceeded to Spain.

Marseilles.

[36]The Spanish war was neither very long nor sanguinary, for the Romans were not much disposed to fight against each other; and as Cæsar sought to gain over the partisans of his rival by kindness, rather than to conquer them by force of arms, he showed the greatest clemency to those who submitted, and in forty days was master of the whole province.

The return of Cæsar to Marseilles.

[37]On returning to Marseilles, he found that the inhabitants had offered to surrender, on condition of a truce being granted until his arrival; so he was content with obliging them to give up their ships and arms, and to receive a garrison into the town. [38]He then returned to Rome, where he was made dictator and in this capacity he restored to their civic rights the sons of those who had been proscribed by Sulla. He also made some beneficial laws with regard to debts and landed property, [39]and then set out for Greece, where Pompey had been actively engaged in collecting forces to oppose him.

For some months, nothing very remarkable occurred. The two armies moved from place to place without coming to a general engagement, till at length Cæsar entered Thessalay, and took the town of Gomphi by assault. Pompey followed, and they encamped in sight of each other [40]on the plains of Pharsalia, where the memorable battle was fought, that decided the cause in favour of Julius Cæsar.

B.C. 48. Defeat of Pompey in the battle of Pharsalia.

This battle took place in the month of August, which was then called by the Romans Sextilis, or the sixth month, and it was in the year 48 B.C.

Flight of Pompey to Mitilene.

[41]Pompey fled to Mitilene, where he had left his wife Cornelia, and taking her with him, he set sail for Egypt, hoping to find protection at the court of that country, as he had been very serviceable to the late king, and had therefore a right to look for a kind reception from his son, who was now reigning. The young king, however, was but a

boy, [42]and was, moreover, at war with his eldest sister Cleopatra, who wanted to gain sole possession of the throne, for it had been left to them jointly by their father. [43]She was at this time raising an army in Syria, with the view of deposing her brother Ptolemy, whose ministers persuaded him that it would be desirable to procure the alliance of Cæsar, which they thought might be done by putting Pompey to death, instead of granting him the protection he was coming to seek. The king consented; and accordingly, as soon as the ship appeared in sight with Pompey on board, a boat was sent out to meet it, on pretence of landing him in safety, and he was stabbed before he reached the shore, in sight of his wife and friends, who were watching anxiously from the deck of the ship to see him land, being afraid some treachery was intended. Such was the end of Pompey the Great, in the fifty-eighth year of his age.

Pompey assassinated.

[44]Soon after this catastrophe, Cæsar landed in Egypt; and as the princes of that country were vassals of Rome, he took upon himself to decide the dispute between Ptolemy and his sister. Now Cleopatra, though a wicked, ambitious woman, was gifted with extraordinry wit and beauty; and being quite conscious of her own attractions, she did not hesitate to appear before Cæsar, who, contrary to the expectations of the king's party, decided in her favour.

Landing of Cæsar in Egypt.

[45]The royal army was immediately put in hostile array, and Cæsar, who had brought but a small force, fortified himself in the palace of which he had taken possession, in hopes of being able to hold out till assistance should arrive. The palace was set on fire, and the flames reached the famous Alexandrian library, which was partly consumed; so that many valuable works were no doubt lost on that occasion, although the library continued to be the finest in the world, till the seventh century of the Christian era, when it was destroyed by the Arabs.

Partial destruction of the Alexandrian library.

[46]Cæsar escaped by setting fire to the shipping that blockaded the port, and went to the isle of Pharos, where he maintained himself till reinforcements arrived; when he returned to Alexandria, made himself master of the city, and placed Cleopatra on the throne. Her brother, in attempting to make his escape, was drowned in the Nile. [47]Cæsar then set out for Syria, when Pharnaces, the son of the famous Mithridates, had raised an insurrection against the Roman government, with the view of recovering his father's throne. He had collected a vast army, and fought a great battle with Cæsar, who defeated him, and again reduced the province to subjection.

Cleopatra.

The return of the conquerors to Rome.

Having thus settled the affairs of Egypt and Syria, the conqueror returned to Rome, where his presence was much needed, for [48]he had entrusted the management of affairs during his absence to Mark Antony, who, in concert with Dolabella, one of the tribunes, had created great confusion by reviving an old law for the abolition of debts, their object being to get rid of their own. They were of course supported by all who were, like themselves, involved in debt, and were opposed by those to whom money was owing; so that the streets were constantly disturbed by quarrels and fights between debtors and creditors; but [49]when Cæsar came back, he set aside the law altogether, and thus order was restored.

Effort to maintain the free constitution.

It was now evident to all, that Cæsar would become the sole and absolute ruler of the Roman Empire, unless some great effort was made on the part of the republicans to preserve the form of government. [50]Among those who were distinguished for their attachment to the free constitution, was Cato, a noble Roman, who was governor of the town of Utica, on the coast of Africa. [51]This celebrated patriot headed a league formed against Cæsar by the friends of Pompey; and to strengthen his party, had made

an alliance with Juba, king of Numidia, who reigned over the finest part of the kingdom of Jugurtha. Juba.

[52] Cæsar, with his usual promptitude, embarked with a large army for Africa; gained a decisive victory over Juba, and then marched direct to Utica, to the great dismay of the inhabitants, who, not having had time to prepare for defence, surrendered without opposition. The submission of this town is memorable on account of the voluntary death of Cato, who calmly put an end to his own existence, that he might not witness the fall of the republic. Juba had destroyed himself after his defeat, and his kingdom was transformed into a Roman province.

Return of Cæsar to Rome

The return of Cæsar to Rome was hailed with joy, and followed by a season of festivity. [53] He celebrated his victories by four splendid triumphs; feasted the people at tables in the streets, and provided entertainments of all kinds for them at the theatres; besides which, every poor citizen received ten pecks of corn, ten pounds of oil, and a donation in money. The veteran soldiers were rewarded with money and grants of land, so that all had cause to praise the munificence of Cæsar, who was now created dictator for ten years, which was almost the same as being made king.

But his wars were not yet over, [54] he had scarcely had leisure to think of peace, when he was obliged to set out on a fresh campaign to Spain, where a rebellion had broken out in favour of the sons of Pompey, who were the chief leaders. This war lasted several months, and was carried on in Grenada, the northern part of which is bounded by mountains that are almost inaccessible, and formed a stronghold for the insurgents. [55] At length, the two parties came to an engagement on the plains of Munda, and Cæsar gained a decided victory, which brought the civil wars to an end, for one of the Pompeys was slain, and the other took refuge among the Celtiberians.

Engagement on the plains of Munda

End of Cæsar's warlike career.

Cæsar's warlike career was now over, for although he formed great plans for extending the empire in the east, he was not permitted to live to carry them into execution, as it was only one year from the time of the battle of Munda, that he fell a victim to a mistaken notion of patriotism.

B.C. 45. Cæsar's return to Rome, where he attained the supreme power.

[56] On his return from Spain he was made dictator for life, and thus was invested with all the power of an absolute sovereign, nothing being wanting but the title; for although he was called Imperator, or emperor,[57] the term was not used at that time in the sense in which it was afterwards understood, but merely meant commander of the armies, and had been bestowed on Pompey and other generals as well as on him. He was allowed to wear a laurel crown at all times, and it is said that he esteemed this privilege very highly, because it concealed his loss of hair.

Cæsar's reform of the calendar.

[58] It was about this time that Cæsar made his famous reform of the calendar, in which he was assisted by a Grecian astronomer of Alexandria. The old Roman months, as regulated by the Pontiffs, had never made a complete year, so that, every now and then, it had been necessary to insert an additional month to bring the seasons into their proper places again; but this was such a very uncertain method, that Cæsar, who was a man of science, turned his attention to the subject, and with the help of the astronomer, regulated the calendar, so that the months should correspond with the real length of the year, which he made to consist of 365 days, beginning on the first of January; and as he found by his calculations, that there were about six hours over, he ordered that one day should be added in every four years, which is what we call leap year.

Correction of the calendar by Pope Gregory.

This calculation was afterwards found to be incorrect by eleven minutes in each year, but the error was not mended till the sixteenth century of our era, when Pope Gregory corrected the calendar of Julius Cæsar in all catholic

countries; but the alteration was not adopted in England till the reign of George the Second; when in consequence of the trifling mistake made by Cæsar, we were as much as ten days in advance, so that ten days were omitted in the year 1752, to bring us right again.

Military colonies.

[59] Cæsar founded a number of military colonies in southern Gaul, Italy, Greece, and Africa; among which were Carthage and Corinth; but although these cities were re-built and re-peopled, they were not like the Carthage and Corinth of ancient times.

The legislation of Cæsar.

As to the legislation of Cæsar, there is little to be said about it, as his plans for the improvement of the state were frustrated by his premature death. [60] His chief acts were of a despotic nature, for he assumed the right of disposing of half the offices of state, and of recommending candidates for the rest; and he gave places in the senate to whomsoever he pleased, and increased the number of senators to nine hundred. [61] These, and other arbitrary measures, made it evident that he did not merely look upon himself as the chief of a republic, but as the sovereign lord of the people who were to be ruled by his will; therefore, a number of persons, many of whom were, no doubt, actuated by patriotic motives, formed a conspiracy against his life, thinking that the freedom of the constitution might thus be restored. They forgot that the people themselves were not like the Romans of earlier times, and that they could not bring back all things to their former state by destroying Cæsar; but, on the contrary, would only be making room for ambitious men of less ability to usurp the sovereign power.

The principal conspirators.

[62] The principal conspirators were Brutus and Cassius, the former being the nephew and son-in-law of Cato. They had both been generals under Pompey, but had been pardoned by Cæsar, and had received many marks of favour from him. They were also prætors, for besides

the chief prætor, there were other magistrates who bore the same title and were next to him in dignity, as our aldermen are to the lord mayor, and to this rank Cæsar had raised Brutus and Cassius, who were likewise senators. [63]It was resolved to kill Cæsar in the senate house, and the day fixed for the deed was the ides of March, that is, the fifteenth day of the month.

The ides of March.

It is said that Cæsar knew there was a plot against his life, and had been warned to beware of the ides of March; but would take no precaution, saying he would rather die at once than live in fear of assassination; so, on the fatal morning, he went to the senate house and took his seat as usual. The conspirators soon gathered around him, and he was struck with a dagger. Rising instantly, he ran his writing style into the arm of him who had given the blow, and rushed towards the door; but ere he reached it, fell, pierced with many wounds.

B.C. 44. Conspiracy against Cæsar, and his assassination.

Cæsar was in his fifty-sixth year at the time of his death, which happened[64] in the year B.C. 44. He was a noble-looking man, tall, and commanding in appearance, with an open countenance, fair complexion, and fine dark eyes. He was extremely nice, even to effeminacy, in his dress; and having become bald towards the latter part of his life, he took every opportunity of wearing his crown of laurel. His birthday was in the month Quinctillis, or fifth of the old Roman year, which, in honour of him, was afterwards called Julius, or July.

When Cæsar was dead, Brutus and Cassius retired to the Capitol, not knowing what measures might be adopted by the senate; but after two days, Mark Antony, who was consul, assembled the senators, to consult as to what was to be done, when it was agreed that it would be best to make an accommodation with the conspirators, who consequently appeared the next day in the senate house, as if nothing had happened. Great excitement, however,

prevailed in the city, which broke out into open riots on the day of Cæsar's funeral.

Riots on the day of Cæsar's funeral.

It was the custom of the Romans to carry the bodies of great men, arrayed in their official robes, through the Forum, on a couch, which was set down before the rostrum, while the funereal oration was delivered by the nearest relative. Mark Antony was the orator on this occasion; and having spoken warmly in praise of the deceased, he held up the toga Cæsar had worn on the day of the murder, which was, of course, covered with blood. This sight was quite enough to infuriate a Roman mob, which was always inclined to be tumultuous. A disturbance arose; a funereal pile was made on the spot, and the body burnt there, the people throwing on everything they could find, to feed the flames; after which they set fire to the houses of the chief conspirators, who were obliged to hide themselves, for fear of being torn to pieces. At length the ringleader was put to death, and order was restored.

Cæsar's funereal oration.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter

1 Who was Catiline?
2 What was the object of his plot?
3 Who was the consul at this period?
4 How did Cicero acquire fame?
5 Who were the chief law students of this period?
6 What change took place with regard to the law?
7 How was Catiline's conspiracy defeated?
8 What great man was suspected of being concerned in the plot?
9 What rank was held by Cæsar at this time?
10 When was he made consul?
11 Who were the other leading men at Rome?
12 How did the three secure their power?
13 How did they divide the government of the provinces?
14 Why did Pompey remain at Rome?
15 What became of Crassus?

55 What was the battle of Munda?
56 When did the power of Cæsar reach its highest point?
57 What did the title of Emperor signify at this period?
58 What was the famous reform of the calendar?
59 What cities were rebuilt as military colonies?
60 How did Cæsar employ his power?
61 Why was a conspiracy formed against him?
62 Who were the principal conspirators?
63 Where was the deed perpetrated?
64 In what year did this event take place?

Questions on the Chapter.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SECOND MONARCHY.

[1]CÆSAR, who died immensely rich, had left a will, in which Octavius, his sister's grandson, was nominated his heir. Octavius, afterwards Augustus Cæsar, was pursuing his studies in Greece at the time of his uncle's assassination; but as soon as he heard the news, he hastened to Rome, to claim his inheritance. [2]Antony, however, had already possessed himself of vast sums of money, which Cæsar had accumulated; and as the supreme power was now in his hands, for he was still consul, there was no means of forcing him to make restitution. It was with great difficulty that young Octavius, who from that time was called Cæsar, could obtain the will: but this was at length surrendered, and he took possession of such estates as had not yet been disposed of by Antony.

Cæsar's will.

[3]In the meantime, Brutus and Cassius had gone to Athens, where they were so well received, that Brutus soon ruled in Greece; while Cassius proceeded to Syria, where he was no less fortunate.

[4]Antony had acted so badly during his consulship, that, as soon as he was out of office, he was declared a public enemy, and the senate resolved to go to war with him, as he had assumed the government of Cisalpine Gaul. [5]Oc-

Conduct of Antony.

Octavius Cæsar made Prætor.

tavius Cæsar was made prætor, and, with the two new consuls, led three armies against Antony, who sustained a total defeat in the neighbourhood of Bologna, and fled, with his cavalry to the Alps. Both consuls fell in the battle, and Cæsar took the command of the whole army, although he was only twenty years of age.

Octavius was not so great a character as Julius. [6] He was crafty, cautious, and cold-hearted. Most of his designs were accomplished by dissimulation; and he could pretend friendship, or express noble sentiments without feeling either, when it answered his purpose to do so.

[7] Soon after the defeat of Antony, he obtained the consulship, and [8] his first act was to proscribe all who had been concerned in the murder of Julius Cæsar; not so much to revenge the death of his relative, as to lay the foundation of his own future greatness, by destroying the heads of the republican party. Many fell victims to this proscription; but Brutus and Cassius, for the present, defied his power.

B.C. 43. The second Triumvirate, or confederation between Octavius Cæsar, Mark Antony, and Lepidus.

[9] Cæsar now thought it advisable to seek a reconciliation with Antony, who had been joined by Lepidus, one of the chief men in the state, and the successor of the late Cæsar in the high office of Pontifex Maximus. These three met in a small river island, every precaution having been taken to prevent treachery; and so entirely did they feel that, by acting in concert, they might rule the empire as they pleased, that they made an agreement to the following effect:—

The Triumvirs.

They were to govern jointly for five years, under the title of Triumvirs; during which they were to have all offices in their gift, and to decide on all affairs. They also settled in what manner the provinces should be divided among them; and that Cæsar and Antony should conduct the war against Brutus and Cassius, while Lepidus should take charge of the city. These plans met with no opposition at Rome, and thus was established the Triumvirate, which

means a government conducted by three persons of equal authority.

First acts of the new rulers

[10] One of the first acts of the new rulers was to publish a proscription, in which were included the names of all who might interfere with their views; and all the horrors of the reign of Sulla were acted over again. The names of one hundred and thirty senators were on this fatal list, and among them, that of the great orator, Cicero. The publication of the list naturally caused great terror and confusion. Some were hunted from place to place, and killed by the soldiers; but the greater number fled to Brutus, trusting their fate to the issue of the war.

Cicero proscribed.

[11] Cicero was at his villa at Tusculum when he heard that his name was among the proscribed. He was inclined to remain where he was, and quietly await his doom. His brother, however, persuaded him to try to escape; but he was pursued, and finding that he should be overtaken, desired his slaves to put down the litter in which they were carrying him, for he was ill at the time, and to make no resistance; and when the soldiers came up, he put his head forward to meet the blow that terminated his existence.

The most abitrary measures were now adopted by the triumvirate to raise money for the wars, by forced contributions. [12] Cæsar and Antony set out for Greece, while Cassius hastened from Syria to the aid of Brutus. [13] The war was decided by a single battle fought near Philippi, a city of Macedonia, and won by the triumvirs. Brutus and Cassius put an end to their own lives, and most of those who had fled from the proscription followed their example.

B.C. 42. The battle of Philippi.

Distribution of lands in Italy.

[14] After this victory, Cæsar distributed lands in Italy among his soldiers, and founded a number of military colonies or towns; but which of the present towns were among them is not known with certainty. The large grants of land now made to the soldiers, caused great distress among the peasantry, who were generally turned out

of their farms to make room for the soldiers, whom they were obliged to serve for hire, as labourers.[a]

The design of Cæsar.

[15] The design of Cæsar was to attach the soldiers entirely to his interests; so that whenever he should find an opportunity of getting rid of his two colleagues in the triumvirate, and securing the whole sovereign power to himself he might be assured of the support of his veteran troops.

[16] Antony went to Asia, where he assumed all the authority of a supreme ruler, deposing and setting up princes at his pleasure, and collecting tribute from the people. [17] It was he who made the famous Herod king of Judæa.

Condition of the Jews.

Before this time, the Jews had been ruled by their high priests; and the sovereignty had long been hereditary in one family. Pompey, as before stated, had decided a dispute between the two brothers, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, for the succession, in favour of the former; but Hyrcanus had been deposed, and made prisoner by the Parthians, a powerful nation, who were trying to restore to the throne Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, who was dead. Antony, however, separated the high priesthood from the sovereignty, and bestowed the kingdom of Judæa on Herod, the son of Antipater, a famous commander in the Jewish armies; for Herod had gained his favour by making him vast presents in money, which enabled him to indulge in the extravagant habits to which he was addicted.

Antony and Cleopatra.

While he was in Asia, he sent for Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt, [18] to justify herself for not having assisted in the war against Brutus and Cassius. She obeyed the summons; but instead of appearing as a vassal in disgrace, she invited the proud Roman to a splendid banquet, and made herself so agreeable to him by her wit and beauty, that he left his army in Asia, and went back with her to Egypt, where he remained for a long time, acting as if he were the king of

a Niebuhr

the country, and spending the money he had raised in Asia, in feasting and pleasures of all kinds.

In the meantime, Octavious Cæsar had contrived to deprive Lepidus of his share in the triumvirate; and it was not long before a war broke out between himself and Antony, which led to the accomplishment of his own ambitious views.

Lepidus deprived of his share in the Triumvirate

[19] Antony lived almost entirely at the court of Cleopatra, and at length, for the sake of marrying her, he divorced his wife Octavia, who was Cæsar's sister. Cæsar, who had already had some disputes with Antony, was highly indignant at this last affront, and was, perhaps, not sorry to have a pretext for going to war with one who stood in the way of his own elevation to the supreme power. The war was not of long duration. Each of the triumvirs had a large fleet, as well as a powerful land army; and a naval engagement took place near Actium, a city on the coast of Epirus, where Cæsar gained a decisive victory. [20] Antony and Cleopatra fled back to Egypt, whither they were soon followed by the conqueror, who had scarcely arrived at Alexandria, when all the troops and ships of the enemy went over to them in a body. Being thus deserted, Antony stabbed himself, and was carried, in a dying state, to the queen, who had shut herself up in her palace with all her treasures. Cæsar wished to take her to Rome, as a captive, that she might be exhibited in his triumph; but she was too proud to submit to this humiliation; and when Antony was dead, she put an end to her own existence by means, it is said, of a venomous serpent, called an asp, which she had brought to her concealed in a basket of fruit.

B.C. 31. Civil war between Octavius Cæsar and Mark Antony. Battle of Actium.

B.C. 30. Death of Mark Antony, and of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt.

[21] The battle of Actium was fought in September of the year B. C. 31. [22] It forms the commencement of a new era in the history of Rome, this being generally considered the point at which the history of the republic terminates and that of the Empire begins.

Termination of the Republic. B.C. 22.

Cæsar sole master of the Roman world.

[23] Cæsar was now sole master of the Roman world, which included Italy, Gaul, Spain, part of Germany, Greece, a large portion of Asia, Egypt, the northern states of Africa and the islands of the Mediterranean. Still Cæsar was, according to the law, only the chief magistrate, and not the sovereign of this vast empire; but he was ambitious of possessing the title as well as the power of a monarch; and this object he at length accomplished.

[24] Great were the honours paid to him at the conclusion of the war. He was allowed two triumphs; and a decree was passed in the senate, that his name should be associated with those of the gods and honoured with libations at all festivals. [25] He now offered to resign his power; but he knew very well the offer would not be accepted, for everybody was convinced that the free constitution could no longer be maintained; and that if Cæsar resigned, some other person would usurp the supreme authority, and probably occasion another civil war which was much to be dreaded. [26] He was therefore requested not to resign, and was gradually invested with new powers and dignities, until all the functions of the government were exercised solely by himself, instead of being divided, as hitherto among several persons.

Octavius Cæsar received the titles of Augustus and Emperor of Rome.

[27] He received the title of emperor, and also that of Augustus, a word which cannot be exactly translated into any modern language,[a] but which was meant to express the highest degree of human perfection and greatness.

The month sextilis.

[28] The month Sextilis, in which he celebrated his triumphs, was named Augustus, or August, and an ancient festival, called Feriæ Augusti, was ordered to be held in future on the first of August, in honour of Cæsar. At this festival, it was the custom for people to wear garlands of flowers on their heads; and the dependants of great families used to go to their masters' houses to receive pre-

[a] Niebuhr says it can only be translated into Greek, *Sebastos*.

vents, as people come round to houses here for Christmas-boxes. The practice of giving presents to servants on that day, is still continued in Italy.

The Temple of Janus.

In the second year after the battle of Actium, the Temple of Janus was closed for the third time, according to the ancient records, since the foundation of the city; being the celebrated signal that Rome was at peace with all the world.

Death of Lepidus.

After the death of Lepidus, Augustus assumed the dignity of Chief Pontiff: so that, like the ancient kings, he was at the head of the state religion, which gave him still more power than he previously possessed as a sovereign.

[29] It has already been stated, that the title of emperor, as conferred on Julius Cæsar, was a military one, and only had reference to his command over the armies; but with regard to his successors, it implied also the sovereignty of the state; and in this sense it has come down to our times. As long, however, as the empire lasted, it was usual to style the sovereign of Rome, Emperor, when speaking of him in his military capacity; and to call him Cæsar, when referring to his civil authority.[a] Formerly, any general, invested with the title of Imperator, was distinguished by a purple robe; but from this time the purple was one of the ensigns of imperial dignity.

Exercise of the supreme power by Augustus.

[30] Augustus began to exercise his supreme authority by ejecting from the senate a number of ignorant and unfit persons, so that he reduced the number to six hundred. He recalled many who had been banished for political offences and restored their estates. He also established a vigilant police, by which Italy was freed from the molestation of the banditti that, during the civil wars, had infested not only the country and provincial towns, but even Rome itself; and he repaired the great roads of Italy which had been suffered to get into a bad condition.

a Library of Useful Knowledge.

Public roads.

The public roads were among the most valuable, as well as the most durable, monuments of the power and greatness of the Roman nation. Some of these roads extended from the centre of Rome, to the most remote provinces of the empire. The portions of road within the city were paved with stones, such as is chiefly used for the foot-pavement in London. The roads through the open country were at first overlaid with gravel, but afterwards paved on a bed of concrete, as may be yet observed in the remnants of Roman roads in Britain.

The Censors surveyors of the roads.

At an early period, the censors had the care of the public roads; but Augustus Cæsar appointed surveyors of the roads, Curatores Viarum; and these officers had the power of enforcing the performance of state labour, to keep them in repair, exemption from which might be purchased with money. The construction of new roads, when not owing to the munificence of public-spirited persons, was paid for out of the revenues of the government, and frequently made by the military, who used to labour four hours daily, at some useful public work, in the open air, to give and to keep up their health and strength and fit them for military duties.

The greatest works achieved in the time of Augustus.

[31] But the greatest works performed in the time of Augustus, were those by which Rome was converted from a very plain city into the most magnificent capital in the world. It was a favourite saying with the emperor, that he had found it a city of brick, but would leave it one of marble; and this he truly did; for the splendid edifices that he raised were constructed chiefly of that material. The people were not taxed or oppressed in any way for these improvements, which were made at the expense of Augustus himself and the wealthy nobles who were stimulated by his example. [32] Among these was his son-in-law, Agrippa, one of the greatest men of the age, who held a distinguished rank in the empire, being next to the em-

peror in authority and dignity. He was a great soldier and engineer, an eminent statesman, and a liberal patron of the arts. [33] He spent vast sums in public works, the greatest of which was the Pantheon, a circular temple, dedicated to all the gods; the remains of which are still standing. The beauty of this edifice consisted in its just proportions, and fine dome, supported by sixteen columns of white marble; but it is not perfect now, as parts of it were taken away to supply materials for building St. Peter's Church.

The Pantheon.

The works of Augustus were directed towards the general embellishment of the city, rather than the erection of any particular edifice; and the Campus Martius, till then an open space, began to be covered with elegant buildings; but there was no royal palace, for the emperor resided in a private house, and his style of living was not different from that of the rich citizens.

General embellishment of the city

The reign of Augustus was not passed entirely in peace. [34] The mountain tribes, in the north of Spain, were constantly in arms to defend their liberty from the encroachment of the Romans, whose supremacy had not yet been acknowledged in those parts of the country where the Spaniards, in after times, defended themselves against the Moors. It was a few years after the battle of Actium, that Cæsar undertook an expedition against those warlike nations; and, after much bloodshed, forced them to submit; and from that time no more opposition was made to the Roman dominion in Spain. The conquests of Augustus were followed by the establishment of Roman military colonies, [35] the greatest of which are now the towns of Saragossa, Badajoz, Merida, and Braza.

Establishment of Roman military colonies.

[36] Roman civilization was now rapidly spread through Spain. Learning was cultivated; the country improved; new towns were built; villas and ornamental gardens constructed; roads made; and the people taught many useful

arts, of which they were till then ignorant. This was the case also in Gaul, and afterwards in Britain; for wherever the Roman dominion was firmly established, many opulent families went to reside; and as they were the superior people, the natives of the higher classes adopted their dress, language, and manners.

Agriculture and Horticulture under the Romans.

They greatly improved the agriculture and horticulture of Europe, by introducing into the provinces the flowers and fruits of the east, and the cultivation of the flax from Egypt; and this reminds me to mention, that it was[37] in the time of Angustus, when Egypt became a Roman province, that linen began to be used among the Romans, a manufacture for which the Egyptians were particularly famous. Glass was also manufactured at Alexandria, and sent to Rome, which was the great market at this period for the richest productions of every country. Its own manufactures were carried on chiefly by slaves; and one of them[38] was paper made from a species of reed obtained from Egypt, called papyrus.

Manufactures.

The papyrus plant grows in marshy places, to the height of about ten feet, and paper was made from the thin coats of inner rind, by joining them together. A layer thus prepared was laid on a board, and another one placed over it crosswise, which, being pressed together, and dried in the sun, formed a sheet of paper. [39]To make a book, the sheets were pasted together in a length, and rolled on a stick, and the writing was in columns, with a blank space between them. These rolls, called volumes, were kept in cases in the libraries. There were many booksellers at Rome, and most of them employed people to make copies of the works they had on sale, of which a list was usually hung up on the shop door.[a]

Roman Booksellers.

The inhabitants of Rome were, generally speaking plentifully supplied with the luxuries, as well as the neces-

[a] Smith's Antiquities.

saries of life, from different parts of the empire. Ice and excellent cheese were sent from the Alpine districts; pork, geese, and salt, in large quantities from Gaul; spices, perfumes, and precious stones, from the east, as well as many beautiful manufactured articles; and they also received abundance of gold, and silver, and iron, as tribute, from various nations.

Luxuries and necessaries.

Many manufactures were carried on in various parts of Italy; as, for instance, tapestry was made at Padua, and steel goods of all kinds at Como. [40]The principal trade was in corn, and other provisions, for the use of the capital; and this important branch of commerce was under the immediate direction of the emperor, one of whose titles was Commissary-general of corn.

Manufacture of Tapestry and steel goods

There was a fine kind of wood sent to Rome from the kingdom of Mauritania, and used for making large tables, which were often inlaid with ivory, and sold for such enormous prices, that the Roman ladies used to say they had a right to be extravagant in pearls and jewels, while their husbands spent so much money in these expensive tables.[a]

[41]Among the commodities obtained by the Romans from distant parts of the world was manufactured silk, which they purchased of a people who came to their eastern dominions from some unknown country beyond; but whether they were Tartars, Chinese, or Indians, is uncertain.

Roman imports.

The Romans were totally unacquainted with the nature of silk. They did not know how or where it was produced; but they were willing to give any price for it, because it was rare and beautiful. [42]At Rome it was sold for its weight in gold, so that only a few ladies of the highest rank could obtain it: and then it was so scarce, that they used to make their slaves unweave the thick eastern silks, to manufacture slighter ones, so that they might have two or three yards for one: but then it could not have been

a Annals of Commerce.

The use of silk

better than the thin silk which we call Persian; yet, so much depends on the rarity and high price of a commodity, that a dress of this material, which we should now think extremely mean, was esteemed as the height of magnificence by the wealthy and luxurious Romans. It was only worn by females at this period, but in the course of time, the fine gentlemen at Rome used silk in their attire, either in the form of a toga, a scarf, or a loose kind of robe; for it was about this time that the toga began to be left off, except by clients when they waited on their patrons. But silk continued to be so expensive, that Sumptuary laws were frequently made to restrict its use, and it was generally interwoven with cotton or wool; so that it is mentioned as an instance of the extravagance of the Emperor Elagabulus, that he had a robe of pure silk.

Roman luxury

[43]But the luxury of the Romans was chiefly displayed in cookery. Their tables were supplied with the most costly viands and choicest wines, in such profusion, that the supper of a Roman citizen, when he entertained his friends, might have served for a royal banquet. The dishes were often of embossed silver, so large, that a boar might be brought to the table whole;[a] and it was about this time that[44] they began to use table-cloths. Gentlemen in going home from supper, were usually attended by slaves carrying torches; and when a man of rank appeared in public, two or three slaves generally preceded him, to clear the way.

Sedans and litters.

[45]Sedans and litters were in use at Rome, and several kinds of carriages, as the Carpentum, chiefly for ladies, which was like a covered cart, gaily painted and gilded, and drawn by two oxen, mules, or horses; the Currus, an open two-wheeled chariot, sometimes driven with four

The Carruca.

horses; the Carruca, a handsome four-wheeled carriage, used by persons of the first distinction, both in Rome, and

a Smith's Antiquities.

for travelling. There were also post-chaises for making journeys, kept at the stations along the roads.

The Romans at this poriod seem, indeed, to have possessed all the luxuries that wealth could procure; but they had become quite a different people from what they had been in former days; and the power of the empire, in consequence of its extent, now depended on keeping up a large military force.

[46] In the reign of Augustus, a great part of Germany was brought under the dominion of Rome. The Germans then consisted of many different nations, all of a warlike character, and not more civilized than the ancient Gauls. The nobles were all warriors, and lived on their lands, which were cultivated by serfs, as years ago was the case in Russia. They had no towns, and the country was covered with thick and extensive forests, through which there were no roads, which made it difficult as well as dangerous to carry on a war there. The Romans had never cared about making conquests in so unattractive a country; but they found it necessary, to prevent the Germans from making inroads into the empire, which could only be done by reducing them to subjection, and establishing legions on the frontiers.

B.C. 12. Wars of the Romans in Germany.

[47] The German wars were begun about nineteen years after the battle of Actium, and were conducted, at first by Tiberius, who was afterwards emperor, and his brother Drusus, both sons of the wife of Augustus by a former husband. Very little is known of these wars, for the Germans had neither cities nor fortified places wherein to defend themselves, so that there are no accounts of sieges, or the taking of towns; but they fought many battles, in which they were usually defeated, and obliged to seek shelter in their forests, while their lands were ravaged and great numbers of women and children carried away for slaves.

Birth of Jesus Christ.

[48] In the course of twenty years, the supremacy of Rome was acknowledged in all that part of Germany which lies between the Elbe and the Rhine; but it was not firmly established; and [49] towards the end of reign of Augustus, the Germans partly recovered their independence, by the destruction of a great Roman army, composed of the best legions of the empire. This unfortunate army was under the command of the Roman general Varus, who was enticed to follow a body of Germans, through forests and marshes, into a part of the country that was unknown to him, where his troops were so hemmed in, that they could not defend themselves to advantage, and were cut to pieces. Varus and the other generals killed themselves in despair.

This defeat, and the loss of so many of his best soldiers, was a sad blow to the emperor, especially as [50] it was no easy matter at this period to raise new legions, as the people in general were unwilling to serve in the armies; so that it had become necessary to emancipate numbers of slaves, and make soldiers of them. One reason of this was, that the frontiers of the empire were guarded by garrisons, stationed in fortified camps; and the soldiers of these garrisons were obliged to remain there until they were old men, so that they were completely exiled from their country; a system that sometimes led to a rebellion among them.

Beginning of the Christian Era.

A.D. 14. Death of Augustus, and accession of Tiberius.

Augustus did not live long after the defeat of Varus. [51] He died at an advanced age, in the year of Rome 767, which was the fourteenth year of the Christian era; for it was in his reign that our Saviour was born in Judæa.

Horace, Virgil, Ovid, and Livy.

[52] The reign of Augustus Cæsar is considered the great era of learning and the fine arts, among the ancient Romans; so that it is called the Augustan age. Every man of rank had a library; and among the many great literary men of the time, were [53] Horace, Virgil, Ovid, and Livy, the historian. They were patronized by Cæsar; and

Virgil was so great a favourite that he died immensely rich.

Ceremony accorded to emperors.

The Romans were not accustomed to treat their emperors with much outward ceremony, as is proved by many anecdotes that are related of Augustus Cæsar, of which the following may serve as an example. Among the official duties of the sovereign, was that of calling the citizens to account for any impropriety in their conduct, as the censors were authorized to do in former times; and although it appears absurd, in such times as those of Augustus, to bring any man before a tribunal on a charge of waste or extravagance, yet it was sometimes done, nevertheless; and as the emperor was censor, he could not pass by an accusation of the kind unnoticed.

One day, a certain knight was summoned before him to answer to a charge of having squandered his patrimony; but when his defence came to be heard, it appeared that he had improved his fortune instead of having wasted it; on which the emperor told him he was acquitted. "Another time, Cæsar," said the knight, "before you listen to a charge against an honest man, take care that your informer is honest."

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who was Cæsar's heir?
2 How was he defrauded?
3 What had become of Brutus and Cassius?
4 How did a civil war arise at this time?
5 Who took the field against Antony?
6 What was the character of Octavius Cæsar?
7 When was he made consul?
8 How did he use his power?
9 What was the origin of the triumvirate?
10 What was the first act of the triumvirs?
11 What was the fate of Cicero?
12 Who conducted the war against Brutus and Cassius?

50 How were the legions recruited? Questions on the chapter.
51 When did the death of Augustus take place?
52 Why is this reign termed the Augustan age?
53 What celebrated literary characters flourished at this period?

EMPERORS OF ROME.

(From A.D. 14, to A.D. 96.)

[1]AUGUSTUS, when dying, had named for his successor, his son-in-law Tiberius, who was above fifty years of age, and had displayed great ability, both as a statesman and a general. But Augustus had entertained a better opinion of Tiberius than he deserved, for [2]his natural disposition was arbitrary, suspicious, and cruel; and he proved a most tyrannical sovereign. Tiberius.

The history of Rome from this period assumes a totally new aspect. Instead of a free state, where every man of talent had a chance of rising to power, and taking a part in the government, we now find a vast empire under the dominion of an absolute monarch, who rules like an eastern despot, and maintains his power by a military force.

[3]The monarchy, as established by Augustus, was partly hereditary, partly elective, as it was in the time of the kings; but with this difference, that the choice of the kings depended on the senate, that of the emperors chiefly on the army; for although, in many instances, the son succeeded the father, or the emperor nominated a successor, the election was not completed until it had been confirmed by the soldiers; so that the government was soon converted into a military despotism. The monarchy as established by Augustus.

[4]During the reign of Tiberius, several of the German nations were subdued by the son of his brother Drusus, who, from his conquests in that country, obtained the Subjugation of the German nations.

name of Germanicus. The Romans then began to make military roads through Germany; and in the course of time, as their dominion became more firmly established, [5]they built several towns, among which was Cologne, their principal station so long as they remained masters of the country. [6]The popularity of Germanicus, and the fame of his conquests, however, excited the jealousy of the emperor, who recalled him from the German wars, and sent him as governor to Syria, where he soon died, it was supposed by poison. [7]Two of his sons were afterwards put to death; but a younger one, Caius Cæ ar, was allowed to live with his uncle, Tiberius, whom he eventually succeeded, under the name of Caligula.

[8]The reign of Tiberius, which lasted twenty-three years, is, with the exception of the German wars, very barren of events that are of much importance to general history. The emperor was himself a wicked tyrant, to whose suspicious temper and cruel disposition, many hundreds of lives were sacrificed; while, in order to have leisure for the indulgence of his own pleasures, [9]he left the government to an unworthy favourite, named Seianus, who was even more tyrannical than his master, for he was ambitious of raising himself to the throne, and did not scruple to commit any crime that might lead to the attainment of this object. Many men of wealth and consequence, who were likely to interfere with his views, were condemned to death on false charges, and executed on his sole authority, as the emperor absented himself from Rome entirely.

Insecurity of life and property.

[10]The most important act of Seianus, was that of increasing the number of a body of soldiers called the Prætorian guards, who formed the military force of the capital, and the body-guard of the emperor. It was by means of these soldiers that Seianus hoped to obtain the throne; and [11]by thus adding to their numbers, he made them so powerful, that, in time, they took upon themselves

Seianus.

to set up and depose the emperors at pleasure. The Prætorian guards at Rome, were very similar to the Janissaries of the Turkish Empire.

[12]Tiberius at length grew suspicious of his minister, who was put to death on a charge of conspiracy, and [13]a new favourite, named Marco, chosen to supply his place. But it was not to be expected that a bad prince would bestow his favour on a good man; so [14]the new minister, after many acts of violence at Rome, conspired with Caius Cæsar against the life of the emperor, who was murdered in the twenty-third year of his reign, A.D. 37.

Death of Tiberius.

No one was sorry for the miserable fate of the aged Tiberius, who, during the latter part of his life, had been distinguished only by his vices; [15]nor was any opposition made to the election of his nephew, who ascended the throne by the name of Caligula. He was a young man, about five and twenty, of extreme personal beauty; but had always been kept under such severe restraint, in consequence of the jealousy of Tiberius, that his real character was unknown until he became his own master.

Caligula made emperor. A.D. 37.

[16]It is supposed that this unfortunate prince had lived from his childhood in the constant fear of being murdered, and that his mind had become disordered by terror. His acts were those of a madman, whose insanity displays itself in reckless cruelty and extravagance; and being united with absolute power, renders his brief reign one of the most frightful periods of Roman history.

It is needless to enter into the revolting details of the horrid deeds committed at Rome during the four years that Caligula held the supreme authority. Those who read the account of them, may wonder that a man so utterly devoid of reason and humanity, should have been suffered to go on so long in his barbarous and senseless career; but the Prætorian guards, on whom the safety of his person depended, were extravagantly paid, and were numerous

Revolting deeds committed under Caligula.

The Prætorian guards.

A.D. 42. Caligula assassinated, and succeeded by Claudius.

enough to have exterminated the whole senate, if any attempt had been made to depose the tyrant. [17]At length, a successful conspiracy terminated his existence, and Rome was thus freed from a monster, who was equally feared and detested by everybody.

The senators now began to discuss the possibility of restoring the republic; but the Prætorian bands were more powerful than the senate, and they chose to be governed by a monarch. [18]They fixed upon Claudius, the uncle of Caligula, a weak-minded man, who was, by his mother's side, a grandson of Mark Antony, and him they proclaimed emperor. From his early youth he had been neglected by his family, because [19]he was rather dull of intellect, and having lived a very secluded life, and been always obliged to submit to the will of others, he had neither talent nor energy to rule over a great empire. His reign was, therefore, an unfortunate one, because he suffered himself to be guided by designing persons, who took advantage of his weakness to gain their own ends.

Evil influence of designing people.

In these cases, the influence of such persons is often used to compass the ruin and death of men of wealth and consequence, for the base purpose of appropriating their riches, or of removing obstacles to the aggrandisement of their enemies; and so it was at Rome in the reign of Claudius, who, in spite of his imbecility, showed some signs of a good disposition, and a mind that might have been cultivated to some advantage. He had a taste for science and literature, for he studied and wrote history; and some noble public works were performed under his auspices, one of which was a great aqueduct, that bore his name, and supplied Rome with water, during the middle ages.

[20]The most remarkable event that occurred in the time of Claudius Cæsar, was the settlement of the Romans in Britain. [21]It was in the year 43 of our era, that the

emperor sent an army through Gaul into Britain, under the command of the Prætor Plautius, who made some conquests, the news of which induced the emperor to undertake an expedition in person against the Britons. No one had thought much about this island, since the profitless invasion of Julius Cæsar, but Claudius brought over an army, and received the homage of those princes who had been vanquished by his general.

A.D. 44. Britain invaded by the Romans.

Claudius in Britain.

[22]The emperor did not remain here much more than a fortnight; but during that time he took one of the chief towns, which was formed into a Roman colony, probably on the site of Colchester, in Essex.

[23] Plautius carried on the war for nine years against the Britons, and conquered all the south-eastern part of the island, which was formed into a Roman province. [24] It seems to have been during this war that the Romans founded London, which afterwards became a military colony, under the name of Augusta.

Plautius and the Britons.

All those who are acquainted with the history of England, know how much the country was improved, and its people civilized, under the Roman government; and that the Roman laws, manners, dress, arts, and manufactures, were introduced by degrees among the Britons, many of whom were, in the course of time, admitted to the rights of Roman citizens, which, from the time of Augustus, had not been confined to the people of Italy, but were extended to the provinces also.

[25]Claudius had one son; but he had married a second wife, a widow, who also had a son named Nero, and being a wicked, ambitious woman, she persuaded the emperor to adopt her child as his successor, in preference to his own; and when he had consented to this act of injustice, she gave him poison, that he might not have an opportunity to alter his will. Thus died the unfortunate Claudius, a prince who bore a bad name, and was despised by every-

Nero.

A.D. 54. Claudius poisoned. Nero made emperor.

body; yet who was, in reality, more to be pitied than condemned.

[26] Claudius was the first emperor who was obliged, on his accession, to give donations to the Prætorian guards; and this custom was continued, not from the liberality of the sovereigns, but because the soldiers would not elect any one who did not bribe them with such gifts.

Nero was a young man of great natural talents, but a bad disposition, which had been fostered by the influence and example of his mother, who met, in the end, with a terrible retribution for her crimes, in being put to death by order of the son who had been raised to power by her own wicked deeds.

Retribution.

[27] For five years Nero governed with justice and moderation. All men thought well of him. [28] After that time, however, he began, like Caligula, to show signs of a disordered intellect, which exhibited itself in acts of extravagant folly and capricious tyranny. He squandered the public money with such thoughtless profusion, that the treasury became exhausted, and the people were heavily taxed to supply the deficiency. Then he indulged in a passion for music, which amounted to an absolute mania, and led him to be guilty of most unprincely conduct; for his greatest ambition was to be thought the finest singer in the world, so that he did not scruple to sacrifice his dignity by performing on the public stage; and, on one occasion, spent vast sums of money in making a journey to Greece, for the purpose of contending at the public games for the prizes awarded to the best poets and musicians. Yet these pursuits, though unsuited to his station, were at least harmless; but when his insanity began to show itself in acts of cruelty and bloodshed, he was indeed a fearful tyrant. The slightest word that displeased him, was punished with death; and numbers of persons were executed upon the bare suspicion of offences, of which they were entirely innocent.

Nero like Caligula.

A.D. 64. Burning of the city of Rome.

[29] During the reign of Nero, the city of Rome was nearly destroyed by a fire that raged for six days and seven nights. It is commonly said that the emperor was himself the author of this terrible conflagration; but this is at least doubtful, although it is well known that he showed no anxiety to put a stop to the calamity, but amused himself with singing and playing as he watched the flames.

Libraries and works of art.

Many libraries and fine works of art perished in this fire, which is an important event in the history of Rome, as the city was rebuilt on an improved plan, the streets being broad and straight, with stone porticoes in the fronts of the houses; so that it presented a totally different appearance from what it did before. [30] Its restoration was chiefly the work of the Emperor Vespasian. [31] Nero, however, built a magnificent palace, which, from the vast sums expended on its decorations, was called the golden palace; and this he surrounded with extensive parks and gardens, where he formed an artificial lake, for the purpose of exhibiting mock sea-fights. [32] His utter disregard of expense occasioned great distress in the provinces, where the people were subjected to all kinds of extortion to support his extravagance.

The insurrection in Britain

[33] It was at this time, that the insurrection took place in Britain, headed by the celebrated queen Boadicea, whose heroic conduct and tragical fate are too well known to need repetition. The Romans had, as yet, only conquered a part of the island, which had been formed into a province; but after the death of Boadicea, they made preparations for extending their dominion over the whole country, which, in the course of a few years, was completely subjugated.

Conspiracy against Nero.

[34] In the meantime, the crimes and cruelties of Nero had been carried to such an extent, that a conspiracy was formed against him at the court, headed by a man of great power and influence, named Piso; [34] but it was discovered,

and all who were known or suspected to have been concerned in the plot, were put to death. [36]Among those who were condemned on suspicion, were Seneca the philosopher, and Lucan the poet, the former of whom had been Nero's tutor.

[37]The tyranny of the emperor had now grown so intolerable, that a general revolt took place in Gaul and Spain, not only of the natives, but of all the Romans in those countries; and the result was, that [38] the soldiers proclaimed as emperor, Sergius Galba, an old general, above seventy years of age, who marched to Rome at the head of the revolted army. [39]On the news of his approach, the Prætorian guards abandoned Nero, and held themselves ready to receive Galba as their sovereign; while the miserable emperor, finding himself deserted by his soldiers, and hearing he was condemned to death by the senate, fled from his palace, and concealed himself in the house of one of his freedmen; but, being discovered, he was persuaded to put an end to his own life.

A.D. 68. Suicide of Nero. Galba chosen emperor.

[40]This event happened A.D. 68, and was followed by the greatest confusion imaginable; four persons being raised to the throne in the short space of eighteen months. It would be useless to tell of the violence and bloodshed that attended these revolutions. [41]Galba disappointed the soldiers, and rendered himself contemptible as a sovereign, by his excessive avarice; so that he had not borne the title of emperor more than seven months when the Prætorian guards, whose numbers amounted to ten thousand, revolted against him, and proclaimed a very rich man, named Otho, who had gained their suffrage by promises of liberal donations. Marching into the city with the newly-elected emperor at their head, they were met by the unfortunate Galba, who was struck down and killed, when Otho assumed the imperial purple.

Violence and bloodshed of revolutions.

[42]In the meantime, the German legions, stationed on the

frontiers of the Rhine, had chosen for emperor their commander Vitellius, and marched with all speed towards the capital to depose Otho. [43] A battle was fought between these two rivals, near the town of Cremona, when Otho was defeated, and put an end to his own existence.

A.D. 69. Otho and Vitellius successively emperors.

The Germans at this time, as far as the Roman dominion was established, seem to have been at peace with the conquerors, and content to consider themselves subjects of Rome. In Spain and Gaul, too, the natives were living peaceably under the Roman laws; and as their countries formed part of the Roman Empire, so they were looked upon as part of the Roman people. But the provinces were not all in the same state of tranquillity. [44] The Jews had openly rebelled against the Roman government during the reign of Nero, and were now carrying on a war in Judæa, for the recovery of their independence. [45] This war was conducted, on the part of the Romans, by Vespasian, a man of obscure family, who had risen by his merits to the rank of general, and was much respected by the army.

The Germans and the Roman dominion.

The events that had taken place at Rome since the death of Nero, had led Vespasian to aspire to the throne himself; and it was not long after the defeat of Otho, that his ambition was gratified. [46] Vitellius, the new emperor, soon proved himself totally unworthy of the high dignity to which he had been raised, and he was murdered at Rome during an insurrection, which might almost be termed a civil war, from the quantity of blood that was shed on both sides; for Vitellius had his partisans among the soldiers, so that his dethronement was not accomplished without a struggle. [47] As soon as Vitellius was dead, Vespasian was proclaimed emperor; but, as he was still in the east, his younger son, Domitian, undertook to exercise the supreme authority in his name, until his arrival.

Vitellius put to death.

Vespasian Emperor.

About this period, there was a great revolt in Germany

The revolt in Germany.

and Gaul, which caused Domitian to lead the Roman armies into these countries against the insurgents, who were afterwards subdued by his father's generals.

[48] When Vespasian heard what had taken place at Rome, he quitted Judæa, and proceeded to the Capitol, where he was received with great joy. [49] He is described as a very excellent man, plain in manners, upright in his conduct, and free from tyranny. These were great qualities in such degenerate times, and produced a very beneficial effect; especially as the emperor set a good example of moderation in his own style of living, and discouraged the ridiculous profusion so commonly displayed at the tables of rich men, who prided themselves upon nothing so much as the cost and variety of their dishes.

A.D. 70. Jerusalem taken and destroyed by Titus.

Vespasian governed wisely, and soon restored order at Rome. [50] He had left his eldest son, Titus, in Judæa, to carry on the war against the Jews; and it was soon after his departure that the famous siege of Jerusalem was commenced, which ended in the total destruction of that noble city and the breaking up of the Jewish nation.

The feast of the Passover.

It was during the great feast of the Passover, when Jerusalem was crowded with visitors from all parts of Judæa, that the Roman legions suddenly appeared before the city, and blockaded it in every part. They were provided with battering rams for throwing down the walls, and engines to fling darts and heavy stones with great force to a distance, which in some degree answered the purpose of modern cannon. The city was fortified with three strong walls, two of which were destroyed in a few days, with much bloodshed, for the Jews defended them with great bravery. Titus offered to spare the city, provided the people would open their gates and make submission to him; but they refused to do so, being determined to fight to the last, rather than yield, although they soon began to

Brave resistance of the Jews.

suffer from the effects of famine and pestilence, owing to the crowded state of the city.

After a siege of six months, Jerusalem was taken; the greater part of its inhabitants were put to the sword, and the city itself, with its magnificent temple, which had been restored by Herod the Great, was entirely destroyed.

Fall of Jerusalem.

The fall of Jerusalem is a memorable event in the history of the world, as the Jews have never existed as a nation since that time; and although they have again become a very numerous people, they have no country of their own, but are scattered over the face of the earth, and are treated as strangers in every land.

Titus.

Titus is usually extolled as a prince of extraordinary benevolence and humanity; yet his cruel treatment of the prisoners taken at Jerusalem does not justify such an eulogium, at least at this period of his life, however it might be merited after his accession to the throne. The wretched captives were compelled to fight with wild beasts in the theatres at Cæsarea and Berytus, where Titus celebrated the birthdays of his father and brother with grand public festivals, at which these barbarous spectacles formed a part of the entertainments. Thousands were destroyed in this terrible manner; while others were obliged to fight as gladiators until they slew each other;[a] and these barbarities were only looked upon by the Romans, as just punishments for those who had resisted their arms.

Titus returned to Rome, where his victories, with those of his father, were celebrated together, by a splendid triumph. [51] The victory of Titus over the Jews, was also commemorated by the erection of a triumphal arch, which is still in existence, and is usually mentioned among the magnificent ruins of ancient Rome. [52] But the grandest architectural work executed in the time of Vespasian, was the Coliseum, the largest amphitheatre ever known in the

The Coliseum built at Rome.

a Josephus.

world, computed to hold above eighty thousand persons. This vast edifice is still standing, but the stone seats have all been removed, to furnish materials for other buildings.

Agricola appointed governor of Britain.

[53] It was in the reign of Vespasian, that the Roman general, Agricola, was appointed governor of Britain, where he had distinguished himself during the insurrection of Boadicea, and, subsequently, by making new conquests in various parts of the island. In the reign of Nero, he had served the offices of tribune and prætor; for those magistrates, as well as that of consul, still existed, although the popular elections had ceased, and the appointments themselves were divested of all their former authority. The great military talents and strict probity of Agricola, had recommended him to the favour of Vespasian, who had raised him to the rank of a Patrician, an honour that was often bestowed on commoners at Rome, as titles are conferred among us.

[54] It was about a year before the death of the emperor, that Agricola was appointed to the government of Britain, where[55] he soon gained a great influence over the natives, by the humanity of his conduct, and the pains he took to spread among them the arts of civilization. In short, the Britons were now growing reconciled to the Roman dominion, and were beginning to adopt the habits, manners, and language of the Romans; by whose laws they were governed, and under whose protection they remained till the decline of the empire.

A.D. 84. Invasion of Caledonia by Agricola, Roman governor of Britain.

Agricola was the first Roman general that led an army into Scotland, where he drove the barbarous natives into the northern parts of the country, while he established garrisons in the south, and built a line of forts to guard South, or Roman Britain, from the fierce barbarians of the north, whom the Romans called Caledonians, or men of the woods.

Death of Vespasian.

[56] In the meantime, Vespasian had died, and Titus had

succeeded, without opposition, to the throne. A.D. 79. [97] His brief reign, which lasted only two years, is memorable for the great eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which overwhelmed the two cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, situated near to each other, about twelve miles distant from Naples. This awful calamity was not so destructive of human life, as many earthquakes and inundations that have since happened; but it has a degree of interest peculiar to itself, as having been the means of preserving to our times, entire and unchanged, two towns of the ancient Romans, exactly as they were in the days of Titus Cæsar.

Succession of Titus.

From the most remote ages of which we have any account to the year 63 of the Christian era, the mountain had exhibited no signs of its volcanic character. Its sides were covered with fertile fields, and near its base were the populous cities of which we are speaking. During the reign of Nero, they were partly destroyed by an earthquake, but the mountain did not then throw out any volcanic matter. They were rebuilt, as is known by some records discovered in them since their exhumation,[a] and sixteen years afterwards they were buried by the terrible convulsion of nature that must have entirely changed the face of that part of the country. The mass formed by the ashes and lava that issued from the volcano, was from 70 to 112 feet deep, so that the new surface was so much higher than the old one; which, with its towns and detached habitations, parks, gardens, meadows, and vineyards, were all buried beneath.

Eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and destruction of Pompeii.

The mass formed by the ashes and lava

There is no particular narrative extant of the destruction of the cities. The ancient writers merely mention the fact of their having been destroyed; but so slightly, that the statement might have been doubted but for their accidental discovery, in sinking a well, in the early part

[a] Brande's Dictionary of Science and Literature.

Pliny's account.

of the last century. The only account that has been preserved of the fate of any individual that perished by the awful visitation, is that of Pliny, the natural historian; who, on the first appearance of the eruption, went to a villa in the neighbourhood, where he stayed for some hours, to watch the phenomenon; but finding that the house would soon be overwhelmed by the showers of ashes and hot stones that were falling thickly around, he and all the family ventured forth with pillows over their heads, hoping to gain some place of safety. Pliny was suffocated by the sulphureous state of the atmosphere; and this was probably the fate of many others.

The inhabitants of Herculaneum.

There can be no doubt, however, that the inhabitants of Herculaneum and Pompeii had sufficient warning of the approaching calamity, to make their escape, and that most of them did so; but it is evident that some of them delayed their flight, until it was too late to save themselves, as is proved by the remains of human beings, found in situations that showed how instantaneously death must have overtaken them. Seventeen persons were thus

Pompeii.

discovered in the cellar of a house at Pompeii, enclosed in a hard substance, which probably burst into the vault in a liquid form, and hardened as it cooled. When this cellar was excavated, the perfect mould of a woman with a child in her arms, was found in the solid substance that had filled it; and within this mould, were two skeletons, the larger of which had a chain of gold round the neck, and rings on the fingers. In the barracks were discovered the remains of two soldiers, chained to the stocks, who had, no doubt, been forgotten amid the terror, darkness, and confusion of that dreadful day. Those who escaped from the devoted cities, would naturally carry away with them all their most valuable effects; nor could they have imagined that what they left behind them would be of so much historical importance in after ages, when all traces

of the domestic life of the Romans would have long since been obliterated.

Roman houses.

[58]The houses at Pompeii and Herculaneum, and, most probably, of all the provincial towns of Italy, in the time of the Roman emperors, were only one or two stories high, consisting of a number of small rooms built round a court, over the entrance of which was written the name of the owner. The shops were open to the streets, with folding doors, like a coach-house, and signs painted over them, denoting the trade carried on within. At Pompeii, many of these were taverns, where hot wine, and a liquor, supposed to be mead, were sold. [59]Some of the wine was still remaining in earthen vessels of various forms, called Amphoræ; and drinking cups were standing on the marble slabs, when the cities were re-opened. Olives were also found in a jar, in a wonderful state of preservation; a box of pills on the counter of an apothecary; and in a fruiterer's shop, were chestnuts, walnuts, and almonds, without signs of decay.

Amphoræ and olives

The articles for domestic and professional use were very similar to our own, and prove that the Romans were perfectly well acquainted with the useful arts; since, among the numerous relics so strangely preserved, are needles, scissors, compasses, fine surgical instruments, silver spoons, and all kinds of kitchen utensils, as well as tools for working at different trades. [60]But the most remarkable specimens of Roman art, are the metal stamps, used by tradespeople to mark their goods, and also to impress letters on wax, for the purpose of teaching children to read. Not that there was any thing wonderful in the stamps themselves; but how was it, we may ask, that a people so highly civilized, and actually practising the art of printing, to the extent of marking names should not have thought of applying it to the nobler purposes of spreading knowledge over the world? If the Romans had

Specimens of Roman art.

possessed printed books, there would probably never have been any dark ages in Europe.

Death of Titus. Domitian emperor.

[61] Titus Cæsar had reigned a little more than two years, when he was carried off by a fever, to the great regret of his subjects, who had found him a humane, great and benevolent sovereign. [62] He was succeeded by his brother Domitian, a man of a very different character, being [63] as great a tyrant as Caligula or Nero, and much more hateful than either, because his tyranny was the effect of a bad heart, while theirs might be, in a great measure, attributed to a disordered intellect. Yet Domitian was a man of cultivated mind, and a patron of arts and literature; and it was he who instituted the Capitoline contests, in imitation of the Greeks, at which the poets contended for prizes, and the successful candidate was crowned with a garland of bay or laurel.

The Capitoline contests.

The empire under Domitian.

The empire was not entirely at peace during the reign of Domitian. Hostilities were renewed in different parts of Germany; and a war of some importance was carried on [64] with the Dacians, a half-civilized people, who had established a great monarchy, comprising the modern Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia. The Dacians had fortified towns; were a brave and free people; and were governed at that time by a king named Decebalus, who, it seems, defeated the Romans in one or two battles; yet Domitian, having made peace with him, returned to Rome in triumph, as if he had gained a victory.

After this, his sanguinary disposition was manifested without restraint. [65] He put to death those who were good or noble, for no other reason than because they were so. The sight of human suffering was pleasing to him; therefore he caused many to be put to the torture, on very slight grounds of suspicion; and he persecuted the Jews and Christians with unrelenting cruelty. The latter years of his reign were stained with a continued series of bar-

Persecution of Jews and Christians.

parities; [66]but he was, at length, assassinated in his palace, A.D. 96, having reigned fifteen years.

Domitian had recalled Agricola from Britain, because he was jealous of his fame; and that great general died soon afterwards, in retirement, not without a suspicion that his death had been hastened by the tyrant.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who succeeded Augustus?
2 What was the character of Tiberius?
3 How was the monarchy constituted?
4 What were the chief conquests in this reign?
5 Which was the principal Roman town in Germany?
6 What became of Germanicus?
7 Who was Caius Cæsar?
8 How long did Tiberius reign?
9 To whom was the government entrusted?
10 What was the most important act of Seianus?
11 What were the consequences?
12 What became of Seianus?
13 Who was appointed to succeed him?
14 What was the fate of Tiberius?
15 By whom was he succeeded?
16 How is the violent conduct of this prince accounted for?
17 How was his career terminated?
18 Who succeeded Caligula?
19 What was the character of Claudius?
20 What was the most remarkable event of this reign?
21 When, and by whom, were the first conquests made in Britain?
22 Which town was taken by the emperor?
23 What was the success of Plautius?
24 When was London founded?
25 Relate the circumstances of the death of Claudius?
26 What custom was begun by this prince?
27 How did Nero begin his reign?
28 To what cause may his subsequent conduct be attributed?
29 What calamity befel Rome during this reign?

EMPERORS OF ROME.

(From A.D. 96 to A.D. 180.)

THE death of Domitian was naturally regarded as a most joyful event; and the senate hastily assembled to elect a new emperor. The person fixed upon was [1]Nerva a senator of advanced age, who was much beloved and respected for the mildness of his manners, and the benevolence of his disposition, which afforded the prospect, at least, of a reign unstained by cruelty. The soldiers made no objection to the choice of the senate, and the venerable Nerva ascended the throne. [2]His reign was a very short one, and passed away without any remarkable occurrence, except that he adopted a successor, who, on his death, which happened about eighteen months after his accession, was quietly allowed to take possession of the throne, as if it had been his lawful inheritance.

A.D. 96. Assassination of Domitian.

Accession of Nerva.

A.D. 98. Death of Nerva and succession of Trajan.

[3]Trajan, the adopted heir, was the son of a military commander in Spain, and was himself governor of Upper Germany. Both father and son were held in high estimation; and when Trajan arrived at Rome, from Cologne, to assume the sovereign power, he was received by all classes with every demonstration of joy.

Trajan.

The choice made by Nerva, proved a most happy one, for [4]Trajan was not only a great, but a good sovereign; uniting all the qualities of a wise legislator with those of an able general, and a munificent patron of the arts of peace. [5]He reformed many abuses in the government; brought the army into better order, and lessened the taxes; while [6]his amiable empress, Plotina, exerted herself with success to produce a happy change in the manners of female society at Rome, where the ladies, generally, had

long been noted for their levity, their fondness for pleasure, and their deficiency in those domestic virtues which are generally looked for in women, and of which the empress set them an example that was soon followed, as none could hope to be noticed by her who did not conduct themselves with strict propriety.

War with the Dacians.

Conquest of Dacia. A.D. 104.

Trajan distinguished himself by his conquests, and his great architectural works. [7] He renewed the war with the Dacians, and in three years conquered the whole of their country, which was formed into a Roman province, and so many colonies established there, that, about one hundred and fifty years afterwards, when the Goths invaded the country, they found the population entirely Roman.

A.D. 114. Triumphal column erected at Rome.

[8] The famous column of Trajan, at Rome, was erected to commemorate his victories in Dacia. It is 150 feet high, and on it are represented, in bas relief of exquisite workmanship, the principal events of the war; of which, although much injured by time, and various casualties, enough is still remaining to show that the art of sculpture was in a high state of perfection in the time of Trajan. There is a spiral staircase inside, leading to the top, where a statue of the emperor, in bronze, was placed when the column was erected, and stood there till the latter part of the sixteenth century, when it was removed by Pope Sixtus the fifth, who replaced it with a statue of St. Peter.

Noble buildings erected by Trajan.

[9] Trajan erected a great many noble buildings at Rome, among which were a number of government offices, that formed a magnificent square, or place, called the Forum Ulpianum, from his own name of Ulpius, in the midst of which arose the majestic column above mentioned.

[10] A Roman Forum was not necessarily a market place. It was an oblong space of ground surrounded by buildings, and was originally the place where justice was administered, public meetings held, and goods exhibited for sale. Some of the fora, however, were merely markets; and these,

which were very numerous at Rome, were neither so large nor so handsome as those for the transaction of public business.

Formation of aqueducts.

[11] Trajan also formed aqueducts, to bring water to those parts of the city that were not already supplied; he made some good roads; drained the Pontine Marshes in Campagnia; which are now, through neglect, become stagnant, unhealthy, and producing fevers, even to the gates of Rome; he constructed the harbours of Ancona, Ostia, and Civita Vecchia; and established a fine public library, which was attached to a set of baths, as was usual in the time of the emperors, when the baths answered the purpose of national club houses, being furnished with reading rooms, and places for different kinds of exercises and games, such as tennis, throwing the javelin, riding, leaping, football, and a variety of sports. It was the general custom of the Romans to take such exercise, to prepare them for the bath before supper. Tennis was so favourite a game, that few country houses were without a tennis court.

Baths: Thermæ.

[12] The splendid and extensive baths of which I am now speaking, were called Thermæ, and the first of them was built by Agrippa, in the reign of Augustus. They were adorned with marble colonnades, fine paintings, and sculpture; gardens, groves, and fountains; and were the daily resort of all fashionables, and those who had time to idle away; as they were open to the public free of expense. [13] The principal thermæ were those of Nero, Titus, Trajan, Caracalla, and Dioclesian; and remains of some of them are still to be seen.

The emperor Trajan had been educated as a soldier, and had naturally imbibed a taste for military fame. He was ambitious of being renowned in history as a conqueror; and although his victories over the Dacians fully entitled him to be ranked among the great heroes of the age, he was desirous of a still more brilliant fame; therefore, after

a long interval of peace, he gladly seized the opportunity of going to war with the Parthians, and the Roman eagles were again displayed in Asia. An eagle was the Roman ensign, or banner, made of gold or silver, of which each legion carried one.

The Parthians reduced to submission.

[14]Trajan reduced the Parthians to submission, and made them acknowledge a king of his selection, who received the kingdom from him as a fief. He also made conquests over other eastern nations, which had not yet submitted to the Roman arms; but as they were mostly given up again in the time of his successor, it is not worth while to encumber our history with the particulars of a war that led to no permanent result of importance.

A.D. 117. Death of Trajan; and succession of Hadrian.

It was in returning from his eastern expedition, that the emperor was taken ill[15] in Cilicia, where he died A.D. 117, having reigned nineteen years. His body was burnt, and his ashes placed in a golden urn, which was conveyed to Rome, and deposited beneath his column. [16]He had chosen for his successor his nephew Hadrian,[17] a man of extraordinary talents and learning, who is reckoned among the greatest of the Roman emperors, although he made no conquests; but on the contrary, gave up some of those acquired by his predecessor, because he wisely thought the empire was large enough without them.

[18]One of the first acts of the new monarch was to release the people from a heavy burden, by cancelling arrears of taxes, to the amount of nine hundred millions of Sesterces, which was above £86,700 of our money. [19]A sestertius was the smallest of the Roman silver coins, and was the fourth part of a Denarius, the chief silver coin, equal to about $8\frac{3}{4}$d.

Hadrian's travels.

[20]Hadrian was the first Roman emperor that made a tour of the provinces. He spent many years in travelling through Gaul, Germany, Britain, Spain, Greece, and all the countries of Africa and Asia that were under his do-

minion; and there was scarcely any part of his empire, that he did not embellish with noble buildings, and other great works of art. [21] In Britain, he greatly improved the city of York, which was called by the Romans Eboracum, and was then the capital, and residence of the Roman governor; and he built the great wall, from the mouth of the Tyne to the opposite side of Cumberland, as a bulwark against the Caledonians. He also made regulations to protect the Britons from injustice; so that this visit did more towards reconciling them to the Roman government than any thing that had been done before, since they saw that they had an emperor who took an interest in their welfare.

Improvements made in Britain.

All the principal towns of Gaul and Spain were greatly beautified during the reign of Hadrian, who also restored Athens and the other Greek cities to their original splendour.

[22] During the whole of this reign, which lasted twenty-two years, the empire was not disturbed by any wars of importance, except one, that was occasioned by an insurrection of the Jews, which was carried on for two years with extreme violence by that people, who [23] were totally exterminated or expelled from Judæa those who survived the war being banished from the country. Jerusalem was rebuilt as a military colony, and received the name of Ælia Capitolina.

Hadrian's reign.

[24] Hadrian died in the year 138, having named for his successor [25] Antoninus Pius, a man of noble birth, and highly esteemed for his many virtues. [26] This prince was more distinguished by his goodness than his greatness; that is, he did not seek to immortalize his name by such acts as make a brilliant figure in history, but was content to gain the love of his subjects, by being just and kind to all. This is the reason why very little is known of his reign, although it was as long as that of his predecessor; but [27] it seems to have passed in peace and happiness, so

Antoninus Pius made emperor. A.D. 138.

far as Italy was concerned, although insurrections are spoken of as having occurred in some of the provinces, owing probably to the oppressive conduct of the governors.

The foreign trade at Rome.

[28] The foreign trade of Rome was very flourishing at this period. Valuable furs were brought from Siberia, and quantities of amber, which was in great request for drinking cups, were sent from the shores of the Baltic, while all the rich productions of the east, were conveyed by caravans to Alexandria, and thence to Rome. Various manufactures, too, were extensively carried on at Alexandria, but more especially those of linen, cotton, and glass.

[29] Antoninus Pius died in the year 161, universally lamented. [30] It is not very clear how he regulated his succession, or why two emperors should have ascended the throne together, and governed jointly; and this appears the more unaccountable, since they were men of totally opposite characters, therefore, ill calculated to act in concert. The one was Marcus Aurelius, who had been a great favourite with Hadrian, and would probably have been adopted by him, but that he was a mere boy at the time of that emperor's death; the other was Lucius Verus, whose father, a senator, had been named to succeed Hadrian, but died ere the throne became vacant. Aurelius had all the virtues of his predecessor, his partner all the vices of Nero or Caligula; but the personal characters of the emperors had not much influence over the events of this inauspicious reign, in which began first to appear those symptoms of declining power, that foretold the dissolution of the empire.

A.D. 161. Marcus Aurelius emperor.

The recruiting of the armies.

[31] The armies were usually recruited from the military colonies on the frontiers, so that most of the soldiers were born and bred in the provinces, and few of them but had accumulated riches and become settled men during the last forty years. Then the love of ease and pleasure was still increasing, not only at Rome, but all over the

empire; while those who ruled in the provinces were frequently very oppressive, and grew rich by extortion.

[32]The barbarian tribes, that inhabited the countries around the Baltic, now began to make inroads into Germany, while the Roman dominions in the east were invaded by the Parthians. The emperor Verus proceeded against the latter, who were driven out of Syria with great difficulty; but the war, which lasted four years, brought a still greater calamity upon the empire, for the soldiers returned infected with the plague, which quickly spread through Italy and into the provinces. The ravages of this pestilence were extensive, and dreadful beyond description, and the Germans took advantage of the weakness occasioned by it, to revolt against the Romans. In conjunction with the northern nations they advanced even to the frontiers of Italy; and[33] for nearly thirteen years, with one short interval of peace, Aurelius was engaged in conducting the wars in Germany, which were not brought to a close when he died in that country,[34] in the year 180.

The emperor Verus.

A.D. 180. Death of Marcus Aurelius; and succession of Commodus.

In consequence of the death of Verus, he had reigned for some time alone, and[35] was succeeded by his son Commodus. [36]Aurelius was the first emperor who established a regular court, as none of his predecessors had assumed an appearance beyond that of chief magistrates of the empire, and commanders of the armies. The government of Aurelius had been blameless, and never was a prince more justly and truly beloved; but it was not in his power to prevent those misfortunes that had rendered the whole period of his reign a most unhappy one, both for himself and for his people.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 Who succeeded Domitian?
2 What is chiefly remarkable of his reign?
3 Who was his successor?

Questions on the chapter.

4 What was the character of Trajan?
5 Name some of his good acts.
6 How was female society improved in this reign?
7 What great conquest was made by Trajan?
8 How were the victories in Dacia commemorated?
9 How was the city improved by Trajan?
10 Describe a Roman Forum?
11 What other public works were performed by Trajan?
12 What were the Thermæ?
13 By whom were the principal Thermæ constructed?
14 Which of the eastern nations was conquered by Trajan?
15 When and where did he die?
16 Who succeeded?
17 What was the character of Hadrian?
18 What good act marked his accession?
19 What was a Sestertius?
20 How was the empire generally improved in this reign?
21 How did he distinguish himself in Britain?
22 What gave rise to a war in this reign?
23 What was its result?
24 When did the death of Hadrian take place?
25 Who was his successor?
26 What was the character of Antoninus Pius?
27 What is remarkable of his reign?
28 What was the state of trade at this period?
29 When did the death of the emperor take place?
30 To whom had he left the throne?
31 What was the general state of the empire at this period?
32 What were the calamitous events of this reign?
33 Where were the principal wars carried on?
34 When did Aurelius die?
35 By whom was he succeeded?
36 Who first established a regular court at Rome?

EMPERORS OF ROME.

(From A.D. 180 to A.D. 285.)

Emperors of Rome.

AMONG those who held the imperial dignity, after the death of Aurelius, several proved unworthy of the high station to which they were raised and died by violence.

Commodus was a brutal tyrant, equally detestable as a man and a sovereign. Leaving the government to the præfect of the city, who ruled like an eastern despot, he devoted his time to such disgraceful sports as hunting wild beasts in the theatres, and fighting as a gladiator. His cruelties rivalled those of Domitian; and he was hated by everybody except the soldiers, whose favour he preserved by bestowing money on them with a lavish hand. [2]By this means his reign was lengthened to twelve years, when he was murdered by some persons whom he had intended to put to death, but who accidentally discovered his design. These persons also proclaimed as his successor, [3]Pertinax, a man who had risen gradually by his merits, from a humble station in life to be præfect of the city. The people were satisfied with this choice, for he was a man of an excellent disposition, and much respected; but the soldiers exhibited some reluctance in confirming the choice; for they did not care whether the emperor were a good man or a bad one, provided he was liberal in his donations to them. [4]But Pertinax was too honourable to seek the favour of these rapacious men by bribery; so he was murdered shortly after his accession, and the soldiers proclaimed Didius Julianus,[5] who had been governor of one of the provinces, and was a very rich man. [6]They chose him in preference to the præfect of the city, who was also a candidate, because Didius promised them the most money, which has given rise to a story, that the throne was sold by auction to the highest bidder.

Commodus.

A.D. 192. Commodus assassinated.

A.D. 193. Pertinax and Didius Julianus emperors.

[7]Julianus did not long enjoy his dearly purchased dignity, for there were three other emperors, elected by the soldiers in different provinces; one of whom marched direct to Rome, and entered the city unopposed; for the Prætorian bands, although they had elected Julianus, took no trouble to defend him, and he was beheaded by a decree of the senate, that acknowledged Severus, the new claimant.

Severus made nus successive emperor.

[8]The senate was very differently constituted at this period from what it was in former times; for the Roman franchise had been so greatly extended over the provinces, that half the world were Roman citizens; and people of many countries were found among the senators.

Severus.

Severus was a man of commanding figure, and noble countenance. [9]He had distinguished himself both as a general and a ruler; and was the first emperor that afforded favour and protection to the Christians, who had been cruelly persecuted by some of his predecessors. [10]He did not bestow gifts on the Prætorian guards; but, on the contrary, with the aid of his army, disgraced and banished them all, for the murder of Pertinax.

Civil war.

[11]The first four years of the reign of Severus were spent in wars with two rivals, Niger, who had been elected by the legions in the east; and Claudius Albinus, the governor of Britain, whose cause was also favoured in Gaul and Spain.

The eastern war.

[12]The eastern war lasted three years, and was remarkable for the capture and destruction of the great city of Byzantium, on the site of which now stands Constantinople. Niger was killed, and all the places that had declared for him, were reduced to submission; after which the emperor turned his arms against Albinus, who had crossed over from Britain into Gaul. He was killed in a battle fought near Lyons; and Severus returned to Rome, where [13]he took a cruel revenge for the opposition he had met with, by putting to death forty of the senators, besides many of the noblest men in Spain and Gaul.

Good laws enacted by Severus.

Having firmly established himself on the throne by the death of his enemies, Severus soon made it apparent that, without being a tyrant, he was a monarch that would be obeyed. [14]He enacted many good laws, and took care that they should be strictly enforced. He administered justice with impartiality, distributed corn to the poor, restored

many of the cities that had been ruined by the war; and was, on the whole, a great and magnificent sovereign. But in order to support his authority, he formed a new band of guards, more numerous than those he had disbanded on coming to the throne; so that the government still continued to be a military despotism.

Caracalla and Geta

[15] Severus had two sons, Caracalla and Geta, to whom he intended to leave the empire; but, unhappily, these princes had disliked each other from their infancy; and this unnatural feeling increased with their years. They had grown up to manhood, when they accompanied their father in an expedition to Britian, for the [16] purpose of checking the inroads of the Caledonians. [17] Severus led an immense army into Scotland, and obliged the barbarians to surrender a large tract of country; after which, he rebuilt the wall of Hadrian, with stone, some parts of which are still remaining.

A.D. 211. Death of Severus. Caracalla and Geta emperors.

[18] Severus died at York, in the year 211, having reigned eighteen years. [19] Caracalla and Geta were immediately proclaimed joint emperors of Rome; and leaving England, they proceeded to the capital; not together, for so great was their enmity, that they would not eat at the same table, or sleep in the same house. [20] Their mother attempted to effect a reconciliation; but Caracalla, the elder of the two, had determined to reign alone; and he accomplished his object by the horrible crime of fratricide. His brother was induced to meet him in the private apartment of the empress, who had hoped, by thus bringing them together, to create a better feeling between them; but Caracalla had only sought the interview for the purpose of executing his wicked design; and, during the conference, gave a signal, on which some soldiers rushed out from a place of concealment, and killed the unfortunate Geta in his mother's arms.

Death of Geta.

[21] Caracalla proved one of the worst tyrants that had yet

disgraced the imperial throne. Former emperors had confined their cruelties principally to Rome; but this man made every province a scene of bloodshed and extortion. He travelled through Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, accompanied by a part of the Prætorian guards, whose pay he increased, and whose avarice he gratified, by raising the taxes to an enormous height all over the empire. Wherever any signs of discontent were manifested, the people felt the effects of his rage in a fearful manner; an instance of which occurred at Alexandria, where he ordered a general massacre of the inhabitants, because they had made some allusion to the murder of his brother, in one of the theatres.

General massacre at Alexandria.

A.D. 217. Caracalla assassinated.

[22]At length a conspiracy was formed against the tyrant, headed by one Macrinus, who held a high office at Rome, and Caracalla was assassinated, in the sixth year of his reign.

Macrinus emperor.

[23]Macrinus was proclaimed emperor; but he had to support his title against the pretensions of a young man named Elagabalus, a relation of Caracalla, and a Syrian by birth, whose mother and grandmother had gained over a great part of the army to his side. A battle was fought, and Macrinus being defeated, was pursued from the field, and put to death; so that he paid dearly for the honour of being called emperor for a few months.

A.D. 222. Elagabalus emperor. His assassination.

Elagabalus was another of those princes whose characters are a disgrace to history. [24]He was not, indeed, so much noted for cruelty as some others; but his boundless extravagance was a cause of great suffering, as money had to be raised in every part of the empire by the most arbitrary means, to enable him to gratify all the expensive whims that a depraved taste and a love of personal indulgence could suggest. The people hated, and the soldiers despised him; and, [25]after a reign of four years, his name was added to the list of those who died by violence.

[26] Elagabalus was succeeded by his cousin, Alexander Severus, a youth of a noble and amiable disposition, but too young to exercise much authority; [27] so that his mother, Mammæe, acted as regent, and conducted the government, with the assistance of the State Council; a court for the administration of justice, instituted by the emperor Hadrian, the president of which was the great jurist, or lord chief justice, and might also be a military commander.

Alexander Severus made emperor.

[28] Ulpian, the president of this council in the early part of the reign of Alexander Severus, was a wise and excellent man, who endeavoured to assist his royal master in making some salutary reforms in the government; but such reforms were not agreeable to the soldiers, and a rebellion broke out amongst them, when the worthy minister was pursued into the palace, and murdered at the feet of the emperor, who vainly tried to save him. This mutinous spirit was no longer confined to the prætorians, but was general throughout the Roman armies; nor was it in the power of the youthful sovereign to bring them under control.

Ulpian and the soldiers.

[29] About this time a great revolution took place in the east. The Parthian kings had long held dominion over Persia; but the Parthian monarchy, which had gradually been weakened by wars with the Romans, was now totally overthrown, and the Persian empire restored by a prince named Artaxerxes, who became sovereign of Persia, and laid claim to extensive countries possessed by the Romans. This demand led to a war, which was conducted by Alexander Severus, in person. [30] The particulars are not very well known; but there is reason to believe that the Romans were not successful, and that they made peace, by giving up many parts of their eastern possessions.[a]

Revolution in the east.

[31] Scarcely was this war ended, when the emperor found it necessary to take the field against the nothern Germans,

a Niebuhr.

and he encamped on the banks of the Rhine, where[32] he soon fell a victim to the discontents of the soldiers, who were instigated by one of their generals, [33]named Maximinus, a Thracian by birth, of low origin, whose gigantic stature, prodigious strength, and soldier-like qualities, had occasioned his promotion to the rank of commander.

A.D. 235. Alexander murdered by Maximin, who succeeded him

The murder of Alexander Severus was perpetrated in the year 235; and the illiterate barbarian, Maximinus, was proclaimed emperor. The consequences of this unworthy choice were very terrible. [34]The fierce despot, jealous of all persons of rank and consequence, sent his emissaries to Rome and other great cities, to act as spies, and execute his orders. Men of wealth and distinction were put to death, on the bare suspicion of not being well disposed towards him; and, in short, [35]his tyranny caused an insurrection in Africa, where his agents were murdered; and two noble Romans, named Gordian, father and son, who held the chief magistracies at Carthage, were declared joint emperors; and their election was confirmed by the senate at Rome. [36]But the governor of Mauritania, who remained faithful to Maximinus, marched with an army to Carthage, and both the Gordians lost their lives in opposing him.

The joint emperors.

Maximinus.

In the meantime, Maximinus, who had never been to Rome at all, but had remained in Germany to prosecute the war, was advancing towards Italy, at the head of all his forces. [37]The senate made great preparations to oppose him; and on hearing of the unfortunate result of the insurrection in Africa, elected the Senators Maximus and Balbinus as joint emperors, the former of whom took the command against Maximinus, while the latter remained at Rome to conduct the administration.

[38]When Maximinus reached the frontiers of Italy, he found the country a scene of desolation. The open towns and villages were deserted, the cattle driven away, and the

bridges broken down; yet, in spite of all difficulties, his troops advanced, and laid siege to the city of Aquileia, on the Adriatic, which was stoutly defended by the inhabitants, who knew they had no mercy to expect, if the place should be taken.

The city of Aquileia.

The soldiers of Maximinus now began to suffer from the effects of famine, and the fever that was so common in marshy districts; and a rebellion broke out among them, in which the tyrant was slain. He had been emperor about three years.

Maximus returned to Rome in triumph, and for a short time all seemed to go on well; but [39]the soldiers were dissatisfied, because the two emperors had been elected without their sanction; so they raised a tumult in the city, and forced an entrance into the palace, where they killed the venerable sovereigns, and proclaimed in their stead, Gordian, [40]a youth who was grandson to the elder of the two emperors of that name.

A.D. 238. Gordian emperor.

It is a tedious task to enumerate all those emperors who filled the throne but for a short space of time, and whose acts are of no real importance in history; yet it is necessary to mention them, in order to show the bad state of the government, which was fast bringing the empire to ruin.

The reign of young Gordian lasted six years. [41]He renewed the war with the Persians, who were making still further encroachments on the Roman dominions; and [42]while he was yet in the east, he was murdered by the contrivance of Philippus, the præfect of the Prætorian guards, who thus obtained the imperial dignity; and having concluded a peace with the Persians, returned to Rome.

[43]Philippus, who was a native of Arabia, is supposed to have been a Christian; and if so, he was the first Christian emperor.

A.D. 244. Philip emperor.

[44]Christianity had made great progress among the middle classes, in most of the chief cities of the empire; but very few of the great people had embraced that faith. In the capital, the Christians were very numerous, and[45] there had been bishops of Rome ever since the time of the Emperor Nero. It is said that Philippus did penance for the murder of his sovereign, and received absolution from the bishop, who was also called Pope, from a Greek word, signifying father; but the emperor did not abolish any of the Pagan ceremonies of the Romans, which has caused a doubt as to whether he really professed Christianity.

Penance for murder.

He reigned from 243 to 248; and in the year before his death, celebrated, with great magnificence, [46]the Secular games, which were festivities held once in a hundred years, to commemorate the foundation of Rome; and [47]as this was the completion of one thousand years, it was considered an occasion for more than ordinary rejoicings. The secular games lasted for three days and three nights, during which time all business was suspended, and the whole city was a scene of gaiety. There were all kinds of entertainments in the theatres; illuminations and processions, in which the images of the gods were paraded about the streets, with music and dancing. It is supposed that the jubilee of the church of Rome, instituted at the close of the thirteenth century, was in imitation of the secular games of the ancient Romans.

A.D. 247. Secular games celebrated.

[48]Philippus had been emperor rather more than four years when a revolt of the soldiers, in Illyricum, caused him to send out Decius, one of his generals, to suppress it. The consequence was, that the revolted legions proclaimed Decius emperor, and forced him to accept the imperial dignity, threatening him with death if he persisted in his refusal; so he became emperor against his will, and with equal reluctance led his army against Philippus, who was killed in a battle fought near Verona.

A.D. 249. Death of Philip and succession of Decius.

[49] The reign of Decius is remarkable for the first invasion of the Goths, [50] a people who came originally from the countries beyond the Baltic sea, but had gradually extended themselves southward, and established a monarchy in the south of Russia. [51] Tempted by the wealth of the Roman territories, they began to make incursion into Dacia, and to attack the cities on the coast of the Black sea. Their vessels were light, flat-bottomed barks, formed of timber, without any iron, usually covered with a shelving roof, and rowed by captives taken in the wars, who were chained to the oar. The Romans had no fleet at this time to oppose them; so that some of the most flourishing cities in Asia Minor were plundered and destroyed.

Reign of Decius.

[52] In the meantime, Decius had instituted a violent persecution of the Christians, which was now carried to a much greater extent than at any former period. Many thousands suffered death for the sake of their religion, in different parts of the empire; and at Rome, the bishop himself was one of the victims; after which, the see remained vacant till the death of the emperor, who declared that he would rather have another sovereign by his side, than a bishop in his capital.

Persecution of the Christians

[53] Decius was killed in 251, in a war with the Goths, which he carried on successfully, for some time, in Dacia, but was at length defeated in battle, and slain. [54] The soldiers immediately proclaimed Gallus, one of the generals, emperor, whose first act was to make peace with the enemy, by paying a considerable sum of money, and ceding a portion of the Roman territory in Dacia. In consequence of this disgraceful peace, he was not well received on his return to Rome, and was soon afterwards killed in a revolt, when the leader of the insurgent troops, Æmilianus, was raised to the throne; but this emperor was not more fortunate than his predecessor; for he had not borne the imperial title more than a few months, when news arrived

Decius killed. A.D. 251.

that an army was approaching from Gaul, headed by Valerian, the commander of the legions in that province. The soldiers then deserted Æmilianus, who was assassinated, and Valerian, a veteran soldier, upwards of seventy, was chosen to succeed him.

A.D. 253. Valerian emperor.

[55] The reign of Valerian, which lasted seven years, was the most unfortunate period that Rome had yet experienced. The empire was beset with foes on every side. The Franks, and other German nations, broke through the frontiers; the Persians invaded Syria; while the Goths came, with swarms of boats, from the Danube, into the rivers of the Romans, landing wherever they saw a prospect of plunder; ravaging the country, as the Normans did in later times, and penetrating even to the southern extremity of Greece; while the plague raged to a frightful extent in various parts of the empire.

It was beyond the power of the aged monarch to put a stop to these calamities. Italy, however, was undisturbed; and at Rome, the higher classes were as much devoted to ease and pleasure, as if all had been going on prosperously. [56] At length, Valerian undertook an expedition against the Persian king, Sapor, by whom he was made prisoner, and treated with great inhumanity, till death put a period to his sufferings. [57] His son, Gallienus, who had been associated with him in the government, assumed the title of emperor; but he was an unworthy prince, and cared for nothing but his own pleasures, while every part of the empire was overrun by enemies. Many of the provinces were seized by usurpers, who assumed an authority independent of the emperor, and maintained it by the aid of such troops as were willing to support them. [58] Britain, Spain and Gaul, were formed into a distinct empire, and for eleven years, were governed in succession by two able and gallant princes, named Posthumus and Victorinus, whose capital was Treves, a large and populous city.

A.D. 260. Gallienus emperor.

Thirty tyrants or usurpers, in various parts of the Roman Empire.

Other usurpers rose up in Egypt, Illyricum, Thessaly, and different parts of the east; while the Persians, after the capture of Valerian, ravaged the whole of Syria, where only a few of the fortified cities were able to resist them.

The Persians.

Amid the confusion, [59] the great commercial city of Palmyra, in the Arabian deserts, under the sovereignty of [60] a prince named Odenathus, successfully opposed the Persian monarch Sapor. [61] Palmyra had been subject to the Romans, from the time of the Emperor Trajan. [62] Its population consisted of Arabs and Syrians, chiefly merchants; who had been in the habit of conducting the immense trade that was carried on between Rome and the great cities of the east. [63] Odenathus not only defeated Sapor, but extended his own dominion over Syria and Asia Minor, which were thus separated from the Roman empire; and [64] after his death, were governed by his widow, Zenobia, a beautiful but masculine woman, who was styled Queen of the East, and was descended from the Macedonian kings of Egypt.

Odenathus and Sapor.

[65] In the meantime, Gallienus had remained at Rome, careless of all that was going on abroad; till, at last, he was obliged to take the field against one of the usurpers, who had marched into Italy, and taken possession of Milan. During this expedition, he was assassinated by his own soldiers, who elected in his stead, [66] a general of distinguished merit, named Claudius, who obtained the surname of Gothicus, in consequence of a great victory he obtained over the Goths, who in his reign again invaded the empire.

A.D. 267. Gallienus assassinated.

[67] Claudius the Second would probably have been a great sovereign, if he had lived; but, unfortunately, he was carried off by the plague, about two years after his accession, in the year 270, and was succeeded, at his own recommendation, by Aurelian, one of his generals, who was readily acknowledged, both by the army and the senate.

A.D. 270. Aurelian emperor.

[68]Aurelian was the son of a peasant. He had entered the army as a common soldier, and risen step by step till at last he mounted the throne; an instance of the caprice of fortune, which is not uncommon in the history of elective monarchies.

The reign of Aurelian was one of extraordinary activity and success.[69] He made peace with the Goths, to whom he gave up the province of Dacia, removed from that country all the Roman colonies and garrisons, to strengthen other places. [70]He restored discipline in the army, and prohibited the soldiers from oppressing those in whose houses they were quartered, by exacting salt, oil, and wood, as they had long been in the habit of doing; or from taking, on a march, sheep, poultry, or fruit, without paying for them; besides which, he punished any misconduct with extreme severity.

Aurelian and Zenobia.

[71]Aurelian went to war with Zenobia, who was conquered in two great battles, the one fought at Antioch, the other at Emesa. The queen headed her troops in both these engagements; and after the second defeat, withdrew to Palmyra, her capital, which was besieged by the emperor. The city was bravely defended for some time, but at length was forced to surrender, when Zenobia was made prisoner. The arms, horses, and camels, with immense treasures in gold, silver, silks, and precious stones, were delivered up to the conqueror, who left a garrison in the town, and returned to Emesa, where he put to death Zenobia's chief minister, Longinus, to whose advice the captive queen, rather ungenerously, attributed her obstinate resistance. By this means she saved her own life, and received a grant of territory and pension, which enabled her to live in splendour.

Inhabitants of Palmyra.

[72]The inhabitants of Palmyra, after the departure of Aurelian, revolted, and massacred the garrison; an act of barbarity for which they paid dearly, for the enraged

emperor returned and took a terrible revenge, by a general massacre of the citizens, sparing neither age nor sex. Palmyra never rose again to any degree of prosperity, and in the course of time, dwindled down to a poor village; but the ruins of its temples and palaces, which are still to be seen scattered over the plains, bear witness to its former grandeur.

[73]Aurelian recovered the province of Gaul, and with it, those of Spain and Britain; and he gained a victory over some German tribes that had crossed the Alps into Italy. In short, he restored the empire for a period to somewhat of its former greatness and military fame; but his [74]career was terminated in less than five years by assassination, at a time when he was preparing to go to war with the Persians.

Aurelian and the provinces.

Aurelian had made several good laws, particularly one to restrain luxury and extravagance; and he executed some useful public works; among which were several quays along the banks of the Tiber.

[75]The next emperor, Tacitus, was chosen by the senate. but died in six months; when Probus, a noble and valiant soldier, was chosen to succeed him.

Probus was a great general, and an excellent sovereign too, as far as the circumstances of the times would admit. [76]He carried on successful wars against the Germans, Goths, and Persians; and repressed the insurrection of several usurpers, who tried to possess themselves of different parts of the empire. He also distinguished himself by his efforts to promote agriculture; and with this view, it is said, he granted to the people of Gaul, Britain, and Pannonia, the right of cultivating vines, which the Emperor Domitian had prohibited.[a]

A.D. 276. Probus emperor.

Promotion agriculture.

[77]It was the anxiety of Probus to improve his native country of Pannonia. now Hungary, that caused his un-

a Annals of Commerce.

timely death; for he obliged the soldiers to labour so hard in draining the marshes and making canals, that they grew discontented, and resolved to release themselves from toils to which they had not been accustomed, by the murder of the sovereign whom they had hitherto loved and respected. Thus died the good Emperor Probus, A.D. 282, in the sixth year of his reign.

Probus murdered. A.D. 282.

[78] Probus was succeeded by Carus, the præfect of the Prætorian guards, whose brief reign was signalized by a hostile expedition into Persia, where he died suddenly, being struck, it is said, by a flash of lightning; an event that was regarded as an ill omen by the soldiers, who, on that account, refused to continue the war.

Carus, præfect of the Prætorian guards.

Carus had shared the sovereignty with his two sons, Numerianus and Carinus, the former of whom had accompanied him to the east, while the latter remained at Rome. During the retreat of the army from Persia, Numerianus was murdered, and [79] a distinguished commander named Dioclesian, who had risen from a humble station, was proclaimed emperor. [80] Marching towards Rome, at the head of the returning legions, the new sovereign was met by Carinus, with all the forces he had been able to collect, and a battle was fought, in which Dioclesion was victorious, and his rival slain.

Numerianus and Carinus.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 What was the character of Commodus?
2 How long did he reign?
3 Name the next emperor of Rome?
4 How was Pertinax deprived of his throne and life?
5 Who was then proclaimed?
6 Why was he chosen?
7 How did Severus become emperor?
8 How was the senate constituted at this period?
9 What was the character of Severus?

Questions on the chapter.

51 What parts of the Roman dominions suffered from their inroads?
52 How were the Christians treated in this reign?
53 How did Decius meet his death?
54 Who were Gallus and Æmilianus, and what befel them?
55 What was the state of the empire in the time of Valerian?
56 What became of Valerian?
57 Who assumed the sovereignty?
58 What countries were wrested from the empire about this time?
59 Where was Palmyra situated?
60 Who was its ruler?
61 How long had this city been subject to the Romans?
62 How was it peopled?
63 How was Rome deprived of her dominions in the East?
64 Who succeeded to the empire of Odenathus?
65 What became of Gallienus?
66 Who succeeded him?
67 How did Aurelian obtain the throne?
68 What was the origin of this great prince?
69 How did he secure peace with the Goths?
70 What reforms did he make in the army?
71 How did the emperor recover the eastern provinces?
72 Why was Palmyra destroyed?
73 What other provinces were regained by Aurelian?
74 How long did he reign?
75 Name the next two emperors.
76 How did Probus distinguish himself?
77 What occasioned his untimely death?
78 How was the reign of Carus signalized?
79 Who was proclaimed emperor on the death of Carus?
80 How did he secure the throne?

EMPERORS OF ROME.

From A.D. 285 to A.D. 337.)

A.D. 282. Diocletian made emperor with Maximian.

THE accession of Diocletian is the beginning of a new era in the history of Rome, as[1] he introduced quite a new system of government, by which the empire was divided

into four parts, each division having its own sovereign, and its own capital. The four sovereigns, however, were not upon an equality. Two of them were emperors, and distinguished by the title of Augustus; while the other two, who might be called their viceroys, bore that of Cæsar.

Supremacy of Diocletian.

Diocletian maintained a supremacy over the rest, and took upon himself the government of the eastern provinces, [2] fixing his capital at Nicomedia, a famous city of Bithynia, where he held his court, with oriental splendour, and ventured to assume the imperial diadem, an ensign of royalty, to which the Romans had hitherto objected. His crown was a broad white fillet, adorned with pearls; and instead of the purple military robe of dignity, he adopted the cloth of gold, in imitation of the Persian monarchs, and required that all who approached his throne, should prostrate themselves in the servile fashion of the east, and address him with high sounding titles; so that the familiarity which had subsisted between the Roman emperors and their subjects, was entirely abolished.

The subordinate emperor Maximian.

[3] The subordinate emperor chosen by Diocletian was Maximian, a rough soldier and a tyrant, who ruled over Italy, Africa, and the islands; and whose capital was [5] Milan, where he also kept a splendid court. [6] The two Viceroys, or Cæsars, were Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great; and Galerius, a Roman general; to the former of whom was assigned the government of Britain, Gaul and Spain; to the latter, that of Illyricum, and all the countries bordering on the Danube. The capital of Constantine was Treves; that of Galerius, Sirmium.

The new form of government.

[7] One of the principal features in the new form of government was, that on the death of either of the Augusti, one of the Cæsars was to succeed him; the object of this arrangement, being to prevent the confusion that attended the arbitrary elections of the soldiers.

[8] The first event of importance in this reign, was the

temporary loss of Britain, under the following circumstances. The [9] Franks, and other German nations near the mouth of the Rhine, had begun to infest the neighbouring coasts as pirates, and made such havoc, that it became necessary to take some means of putting a stop to their incursions. Maximian, therefore, sent an officer, named Carausius, who was skilled in naval affairs, to take the command of the British fleet, which was stationed at Boulogne, for the purpose of keeping the pirates in check; but it was not long before the new admiral found himself in disgrace, on account of a charge brought against him of having kept to himself certain prizes taken from the enemy, instead of sending them to the imperial treasury. Maximian gave orders that he should be put to death; but Carausius avoided his doom by sailing over to Britain, where he persuaded the legions to join him, and assumed the title of emperor. He maintained his power so well by means of his maritime force, that the joint emperors were obliged to acknowledge his independence. [10] He had been emperor of Britain about eight years, when [11] he was assassinated by Allectus, one of his officers, who, with very inferior abilities, assumed the sovereignty, and defied the Roman government.

The command of the British fleet.

Revolt of Carausius in Britain.

The want of good shipping and experienced sailors, had prevented the emperors from attempting to regain the island. But about three years after the death of Carausius a [12] fleet was prepared, and was sent out under the command of Constantius, who landed on the coast of Hampshire, where a battle was fought, in which Allectus was slain, and Britain was reunited to the Roman empire.

The command of Constantius.

[13] About the same time, Diocletian went in person to suppress a dangerous revolt in Egypt, and laid siege to Alexandria, which held out for eight months, when it was taken, and most of the inhabitants put to the sword.

Siege of Alexandria.

[14] In the meantime, a war had been carried on against

the Persians with great success, by Galerius, who routed the Persian armies, recovered all the eastern provinces, and obliged the Persian king to limit his dominions within certain proscribed bounds.

Persecution of the Christians.

During the latter years of this reign, another violent persecution was instituted against the Christians; but Christianity had now taken such deep root, and was so widely spread, that it was not in the power of its enemies to suppress its influence, or long prevent it from becoming the established religion of the Roman empire.

A.D. 305. Abdication of the two emperors.

[15] Diocletian had reigned twenty years when [16] he determined to resign the imperial power, and persuaded Maximian to do the same, probably to see whether his regulation with regard to the succession would succeed. The ceremony of his abdication was performed in a plain, near his capital, when he ascended the throne in the presence of his soldiers, and crowds of spectators, and after an eloquent address, divested himself of his robe and diadem, and bidding adieu for ever to the cares of state, retired to his favourite villa in Dalmatia, where he passed the rest of his days in the quiet enjoyment of a country life. Maximian reluctantly abdicated on the same day at Milan, May 1st, 305.

Constantius I. and Galerius emperors.

[17] The two Cæsars, Constantius and Galerius succeeded to the thrones thus vacated; but as they were at liberty to choose their places of abode, Constantius fixed his court at Treves, while Galerius took possession of the splendid palace at Nicomedia. The places of the Cæsars were then to be filled up, which gave rise to some confusion, for Galerius appointed them both, without consulting his colleague, and gave the government of Syria and Egypt to one; that of Italy and Africa to the other.[11] He reserved to himself Greece, Illyricum and Asia Minor; while [19] Constantius continued, as before, to rule over Gaul, Spain and Britain.

A.D. 306. Accession of Constantine the Great.

Constantius.

[20] Constantius was an amiable man, and an excellent sovereign, but his health was fast declining, and [21] he died in the year following his accession, at the imperial palace at York, his British capital. [22] His son Constantine, who was then thirty-two years of age, was immediately proclaimed Augustus by the soldiers; [23] but his election was opposed by Galerius, who took upon himself to appoint a successor to Constantius, while the senate and prætorians raised to the vacant dignity Maxentius, a son of the late emperor Maximian.

Constantine and Galerius.

It was now evident that the plan of succession marked out by Dioclesian would never answer the expectations he had formed; nor could it be of long duration, since every vacancy gave rise to opposing claims and usurpations. At one time there were no less than six persons holding the title of Augustus, and not one that of Cæsar.

Death of Galerius.

[24] In the midst of this confusion, Galerius died; and Constantine went to war with Maxentius, who was ruling over Italy in a most tyrannical manner. [25] The troops of Maxentius were defeated near Turin; and the conqueror then advanced towards the fortified city of Verona, to which he laid siege, and gained a victory over the army sent to its relief. After these successes, he pursued his march to Rome, and met Maxentius about three miles from the city, when a decisive battle was fought, in which he was again victorious, and entered Rome amid the joyful acclamations of the people, who looked upon him as a deliverer. The triumphal arch, that bears his name was erected in commemoration of his victories, at the foot of the Palatine hill, where it may yet be seen.

[26] Maxentius was drowned in the Tiber, by the breaking down of a bridge, over which he was attempting to make his escape; [27] but there were still two other emperors remaining, Licinius and Maximius, who held the eastern provinces. [28] A war, however, broke out between them,

Civil wars.

which ended in favour of Licinius; who thus gained the sovereignty of all the east, while Constantine became emperor of the west, and restored the city of Rome to its ancient dignity as capital of the empire.

Abolishment of the Prætorian guards.

[29] One of the first acts of power exercised by Constantine was to abolish the Prætorian guards; a measure by which the internal tranquillity of the city was promoted, although its security was impaired, by being left thus unguarded. He made many useful laws and regulations at Rome, and[30] granted great privileges to the Christians, who not only had the liberty of exercising their religion without restraint, but were admitted to all high offices, from which they had hitherto been excluded.

War between Constantine and Licinius. A.D. 314.

The two emperors did not remain long at peace.[31] Constantine was a haughty, ambitious man; and he no doubt had, from the first, aspired to the undivided sovereignty; therefore, he was not sorry to have a pretext for quarrelling with Licinius, and a civil war broke out between these rival princes in 314. [32] Licinius was defeated in two battles, and obliged to sue for peace, which was granted on condition that he should give up a large portion of his dominions, including Greece and Illyricum, or nearly all the country that is now called Turkey in Europe. [33] His empire then comprehended Thrace, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, a large portion of Asia between the Tigris and the Euphrates.

[34] The peace lasted above eight years, during which[35] Constantine employed himself in legislation, and made a number of laws for the reformation of morals and the improvement of police in the cities. Several victories were obtained during this interval over the Goths and Germans, both by the emperor, and[36] his eldest son Crispus, a brave and popular prince, whose subsequent fate is a sad stain on the memory of Constantine the Great.

[37] In the year 323, a fresh war broke out between the

Fresh war broke out.

two emperors, who, it should be observed, were brothers-in-law, as Licinius had married Constantine's sister; but this relationship did not tend to preserve harmony between them, any more than it did in the case of Augustus and Mark Antony.

[38]This was the first war since the battle of Actium in which a large naval force was employed, for each sovereign had a considerable fleet, as well as a land army;[39] and the fleet of Constantine was under the command of the prince Crispus.

The army of Licinius.

[40]The army of Licinius was superior in numbers to that of his rival, but the soldiers of the east were not so hardy as those of the west, and were totally defeated in a great battle fought at Adrianople, when[41] Licinius fled to Byzantium, which was immediately besieged by the conqueror. Licinius, however, could not maintain his position, because his fleet, which formed its principal defence, was conquered and dispersed by Crispus, who gained another victory at Scutari over the reserve troops of the vanquished emperor, who surrendered on the promise that his life should be spared; but the victor was not true to his word, for [42]Licinius and his son, a promising boy of tender age, were both subsequently put to death, and Constantine thus remained sole master of the Roman world.

A.D. 323. Constantine became sole emperor.

It was very soon after this triumph, that his suspicions were excited against the prince Crispus. Constantine had been twice married, and had four sons; one by his first and three by his second wife, who was still living. [43]The common story is, that the empress, being jealous of Crispus, because he was the eldest, contrived to prejudice his father against him, by false representations, and that the unhappy prince was banished to Pola, in Istria, and there secretly put to death. It is added, that the emperor, being afterwards convinced of his innocence, caused his

wife to be suffocated; but this account was very doubtful, and there seems reason to believe that Crispus did actually meditate some act of treason for which his father banished and put him to death. Constantine was certainly guilty of many cruelties; as for instance, the execution of the innocent young son of Licinius; but his severities were usually the effects of policy, not of mere tyranny; and as he lived on the most affectionate terms with his other sons, it is not likely that he would have been so severe to the eldest without a cause. Still we cannot but regard the excess to which he carried his resentment, as unnatural and revolting.

Severities of Constantine.

[44] The next event of importance, was the building of Constantinople. [45] The emperor, perhaps, considered that in having only one metropolis for the whole empire, it ought to be situated conveniently; both for the east and the west; and with that view, no spot could have been better chosen than that on which stood[46] the city of Byzantium. This city had existed about five hundred years, and possessed great advantages for commerce and defence, which were considerations of sufficient weight to decide the emperor in fixing on this spot, as the site of his future capital; and under his own personal superintendence arose the magnificent and extensive city of Constantinople, to which he removed the seat of government. Many of the senators and wealthy families of Rome, of course, followed the court, and fixed their residence in the new metropolis, where all kinds of luxuries and pleasures abounded, and Rome was no longer the first city in the world.

A.D. 331. Constantinople rebuilt, and made the capital of the empire.

[47] It was at this period, that the emperor openly professed Christianity. He built many churches at Constantinople, and prohibited all Pagan rites in that city; while decrees were issued, that the Christian bishops should be obeyed in every province of the empire; but the majority of the

Christianity openly professed by the emperor.

people at Rome still adhered to the ancient faitn,[48] nor was paganism entirely abolished till the reign of the emperor Theodosius.

The court of Constantine.

[49]The court of Constantine was held with extreme splendour, and the rules of the provinces likewise kept up a degree of state that involved great expenses; so that the people were very heavily taxed during this reign, [50]each province being rated at a fixed sum, which was raised chiefly by a land and capitation tax, so levied, that many had to pay several shares, to make up for those who could not pay any.

Division of the empire.

[51]The emperor made a new regulation, with respect to the government of the provinces. He divided the whole empire into four portions, called Præfectures, and entrusted the civil authority over each to a governor, styled the Præfect. These were again subdivided into dioceses, each of which was placed under the jurisdiction of a subordinate præfect, and all the latter were answerable to their respective superiors for their conduct.[a] Rome and Constantinople had each its separate præfect. These officers were no longer military commanders, as in former times; the military and civil officers being made distinct from each other; and it may here be observed, that the ministers and other great men were now first distinguished by being addressed like our modern nobles, as Your Grace, Your Eminence, &c., according to their rank.

Good laws made by Constantine.

[52]Among the good laws made by Constantine, was one for ameliorating the condition of insolvent debtors, by prohibiting the inhuman custom of scourging and torturing them, and by improving their prisons, which, instead of being dark dungeons, were made airy and light; so that debtors were no longer treated like the worst of criminals.

Some alterations were made in this reign with regard to the armies, which, it is thought, contributed to weaken

a Cellarii Geographia Antiqua.

the empire, by leaving parts of it exposed to the ravages of the barbarians.[a]

A.D. 337. Death of Constantine, and accession of Constantius II.

53 Constantine the Great died in the year 337, having reigned thirty-three years.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 What new form of government was introduced by Diocletian?

2 Where did Diocletian fix his capital?

3 Who was the secondary emperor?

4 What was his share of the empire?

5 Where did he hold his court?

6 Who were the two Cæsars; and what countries were assigned to them?

7 How was the succession regulated?

8 What was the first important event in this reign?

9 Relate the circumstances.

10 How long did Carausius reign in Britain?

11 What was his fate?

12 How was Britain reunited to the empire?

13 What occurred in Egypt about this time?

14 What had been the success of the Persian war?

15 How long did Diocletian reign?

16 How did the imperial thrones both become vacant?

17 Who succeeded?

18 Which of the provinces was governed by Galerius?

19 Where did Constantius rule?

20 What was his character?

21 Where did he die?

22 Who was proclaimed as his successor?

23 What opposition was made to this election?

24 How did Constantine support his claim?

25 What was the event of the contest?

26 What became of Maxentius?

27 Was Constantine sole emperor?

28 How was the sovereignty of the east divided?

29 What was the first act of power exercised by Constantine?

30 What privileges were granted to the Christians?

a Niebuhr.

Questions on the chapter.

31 How was a civil war occasioned?
32 What was the result?
33 Which countries remained to Licinius?
34 How long did the peace last?
35 How did Constantine employ the interval?
36 Who was Crispus?
37 When did a fresh war break out between the emperors?
38 What is remarkable of this war?
39 Who commanded the fleet of Constantine?
40 Where was Licinius defeated?
41 What events followed the battle of Adrianople?
42 How did Constantine eventually become sole emperor?
43 What was the fate of Crispus?
44 What was the next important event?
45 Why did the emperor remove the seat of government?
46 What ancient city was transformed into the new capital?
47 How was Christianity promoted?
48 When was paganism abolished?
49 Why were the taxes increased in this reign?
50 What were the principal taxes; and how were they levied?
51 How were the provinces governed?
52 What laws were made with regard to debtors?
53 How long did Constantine reign; and when did he die?

FROM THE

DEATH OF CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

TO THE

FALL OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE.

(From A.D. 337 to A.D. 476.)

The sixty years following the death of Constantine.

THE sixty years that followed the death of Constantine the Great, are chiefly marked by the decline of the Roman power and the progress of the barbarians, by whom it was eventually destroyed.

[1]The late emperor had divided the empire among his three sons; but they were not content with their respective

shares; and[2] a civil war soon broke out among them, the result of which was that the eldest was slain in the contest; and the youngest, being murdered some time afterwards, [3]Constantius, the second brother, became sole emperor. **Civil war.**

It is needless now to say much of princes whose actions and characters had but little influence over the historical events of the times; nor is it of importance to speak of the usurpers that started up to dispute with them for the possession of the throne.

The court of Constantius.

[4]Constantius was a weak sovereign, and his court was more like that of a Turkish sultan than of a Roman emperor. [5]He soon found that he should not be able to rule alone, so he gave the government of the western provinces, with the title of Cæsar, to his cousin Julian, who is generally called the apostate, because he forsook the Christian religion, in which he had been educated, for the ancient idolatry. [6]He fixed his residence at Paris, which was then called Lutetia, and was merely a castle or fortified military station.

Constantius and Julian.

[7]Julian was a brave general, and almost constantly engaged in wars with the Germans, over whom he gained several great victories. [8]At length Constantius grew jealous of his fame, and sent for a large body of his troops, to assist in a war in which he was himself engaged with the king of Persia. The soldiers, not being willing to leave their commander, refused to obey the order, and proclaimed Julian emperor of the west, giving him the title of Augustus, instead of that of Cæsar. Constantius, however, refused to acknowledge his title, and a civil war was on the point of breaking out between them, when [9]Constantius died, and Julian succeeded to the government of the whole empire, A.D. 361.

A.D. 361. Julian emperor.

Christianity abolished.

[10]His brief reign is chiefly remarkable for the re-establishment of all the heathen rites of religion, which were practised at Constantinople while he occupied the

throne; but the Christians and Jews were not interfered with, as Julian was liberal enough to grant universal toleration. [11] He was killed, about two years after his accession, in an unsuccessful invasion of Persia, having rashly ventured into the very heart of the country, without sufficient resources. [12] The troops were suffering at the time from a scarcity of provisions, and the difficulties of a retreat; so finding themselves in confusion for want of a supreme head, they hastily elected an individual named Jovian, who held a high place in the royal household, but had no sort of claim to the throne. [13] Being thus unexpectedly raised to power, he used it to secure a safe retreat for the army, by making peace with the Persian king, on terms very unfavourable for the Romans. The news of this peace excited great indignation in t-e two capitals; although it was probably the sole means of saving the army from destruction. [14] This is the only act of importance recorded of Jovian, who died on his march homeward.

A.D. 364. Jovian emperor.

Christianity restored.

A.D. 364. Valentinian and Valens, emperors.

[15] Valentinian, his successor, was a distinguished general, and a zealous professor of the Christian doctrines. [16] He chose his brother Valens as his partner, and gave him the dominion of the east, reserving to himself the western empire, comprising Italy, Gaul, Spain, Britain, Africa, and Illyricum. [17] His capital was Milan; that of Valens, Constantinople.

[18] The garrisons that protected the frontiers of Gaul from the inroads of the Germans, had been withdrawn by Constantine, so that the province was left much exposed, and [19] Valentinian soon had to make a campaign against the Alemanni, a warlike people, who had devastated the country on the borders of the Rhine, and carried off immense spoils. [20] The emperor succeeded in driving them back, and spent the greater part of his reign in fortifying the banks of the river, and raising troops for the garrisons,

Fortification of the river.

which were partly composed of such barbarian nations as were in alliance with Rome, and willing to serve for pay in the armies.

Invasion of the Huns.

[21] It is during this reign that we first hear of an invasion of the Huns, a people supposed to have been of the same race as the Tartars or Scythians, and unknown by name in Europe till this period, when [22] they invaded the territory of the Visigoths, near the Danube, and made such ravages, that [23] the Goths were glad to seek the protection of the Romans, and were permitted by the Emperor Valens to settle in Thrace. [24] They soon, however, found themselves so cruelly oppressed by the Roman governor, that they took up arms, with a view of conquering some part of the country for themselves; and a battle was fought at Hadrianople, where the emperor, and a greater part of his army, fell, A.D. 378.

Battle of Hadrianople. A.D. 378.

[25] Valentinian had died about three years before this time, and had been succeeded by his son, Gratian, who was advancing to the assistance of his uncle, when the fatal battle of Hadrianople terminated the life of Valens, and opened the way for the Goths to ravage the surrounding country. [26] Gratian bestowed the throne of the east on Theodosius, one of his generals, as being well fitted to keep the barbarians in check, and to conduct the government under circumstances of difficulty and danger.

Revolt in Britain.

[27] About this time there was a revolt in Britain, headed by Maximus, a commander, who was declared emperor by the legions, and who collected a large army of Romans and Britons, whom he led into Gaul, to support his pretentions, thus leaving Britain undefended from the Picts and Scots.[a]

[28] The young emperor, Gratian, hastened to oppose the usurper; but being deserted by most of his troops, he was obliged to retreat; and at length was betrayed

a Ammianus Marcellinus.—Tillemont.

Death of Gratian. A.D. 383.

into the hands of Maximus, who put him to death A.D. 383.

[29] In the meantime, Theodosius, who is called the Great, had entered into a treaty of peace with the Goths, who, being unable to return to their own country, which wa occupied by the Huns, agreed to settle quietly in Thrace, and the country adjacent, on condition of their being exempt from taxes.

[30] After the death of Gratian, Theodosius acknowledged Maximus as emperor of the west, jointly with Valentinian, a brother of Gratian; but as Maximus was not satisfied with this division, and invaded Italy, Theodosius opposed him; and the usurper, being made prisoner, was beheaded.

Theodosius the Great acknowledged emeror.

[31] After the death of Valentinian the Second, who was murdered, Theodosius assumed the sovereignty of the whole empire. [32] His reign is distinguished by the total abolition of the heathen idolatry, and the establishment of the Christian religion throughout the empire. The heathen temples were destroyed, or consecrated as churches; and severe laws were enacted against those who should practise any of the ancient rites.

The papal court at Rome, had already begun to exhibit signs of that pomp and luxury, by which it was afterwards distinguished; and the great power assumed by the pope is proved by the fact, that the proud and despotic emperor, Theodosius, was excommunicated, and compelled to do penance, for the massacre of the people of Thessalonica, who had provoked him to the deed by an insurrection, and he humbly submitted to the sentence. [33] This great emperor died in the year 395, leaving his dominions to be shared between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius; the former having the eastern portion, and the latter the western. It was now that these divisions were first considered as separate empires; nor were they ever again properly united.

A.D. 395. Death of Theodosius.

Roman world divided into the eastern and western empire.

Theodosius was the last great emperor of Rome. From the time of his death, the western provinces only can be termed the Roman empire; and all these were now overrun by different nations of barbarians, who possessed themselves of one country after another, till Italy itself shared the general fate; and the Romans, who had ruled the world for so many ages, were superseded by a new people, and gradually became blended with their conquerors.

[34] When Theodosius made peace with the Goths, it was stipulated that they should assist him in his wars; and according to this agreement, their great chief, Alaric, had fought in the armies of the Roman emperor; but some new cause of dissatisfaction had arisen; and soon after the accession of Honorius, Alaric was elected king by the Goths, and invaded Italy. [35] This war lasted two years, during which time the city of Rome was besieged three times, and at length was taken and plundered for six days by the Gothic troops, who carried off every thing that was valuable, except the treasures belonging to the churches, which they were commanded by their leader to respect.

Alaric elected king.

After the sack of Rome, Alaric carried his arms into the south of Italy, where he laid waste the country, and took possession of some of the towns; but his career was stopped short by his death, which happened in 410, and Italy was thus delivered, for a time, from the ravages of warfare. [36] The Goths were afterwards led into Spain by Alaric's successor, Ataulphus, who founded the Gothic monarchy in that country, but maintained peace with the Romans, having married the sister of the emperor.

The sack of Rome.

About this time, the Franks established themselves in Gaul, under the command of their chief, Pharamond, the founder of the French monarchy; and Britain was voluntarily abandoned by the Romans, who could not spare any of their forces, to keep possession of a distant province,

The Franks under Pharamond.

while they were losing ground everywhere, and were scarcely masters even of their own country.

Attila and Genseric.

[37]The next formidable enemies that appeared in Italy, were Attila, king of the Huns, and Genseric, king of the Vandals. [38]Attila first invaded the eastern empire, and obliged the emperor to cede a large territory south of the Danube, and agree to pay him an annual tribute. He then made proposals of marriage to the sister of Valentinian the Third, and, on being rejected, made an alliance with the Goths and Vandals, and carried on war for some time in Gaul, [39]where he was defeated, in the famous battle of Chalons, by the Roman general Ætius, who had joined his forces with those of Theodoric, the Ostrogoth, and Merovœus, king of the Franks.

Battle of Chalons.

This was the last great battle fought by the Romans; and Attila, in this terrible conflict, lost more than 200,000 men.

Roman emperors made tributary to barbarians.

[40]Having recruited his forces, a few years afterwards he entered Italy, ravaged the whole of Lombardy, and was marching towards Rome, when he was met by Pope Leo the Great, who succeeded in negotiating a peace, and inducing him to withdraw from the country, on condition of an annual pension; and thus both the Roman emperors were made tributary to the barbarians.

Valentinian.

[41]Soon after this, Valentinian, the reigning emperor, was assassinated by Petronius Maximus, a senator, in revenge for some injury. The murderer usurped the throne, and obliged the widow of his victim to marry him; on which she applied secretly for assistance to Genseric, king of the Vandals, who had possessed himself of a great portion of the Roman dominions in Africa, and was already preparing to invade Italy, when he received the invitation of the empress. He soon appeared with a large fleet at the mouth of the Tiber, and on the news, a tumult arose, in which Maximus was killed; while [42]the invader ad-

Maximus killed.

vanced to Rome, the gates of which were opened without resistance; and again that noble city was ransacked by the rude hands of barbarian soldiers, who were allowed fourteen days of license, to destroy and take what they chose.[a] The churches were not spared on this occasion; and many thousands of women and children were carried away as captives into Africa, where they were sold for slaves among the Moors.

Genseric

Genseric continued to wage war against the Romans, with great success, till the fall of the empire, [43]which lasted about twenty years after his first invasion, during which [44]eight emperors were successively raised to the throne.

The death of Maximus happened in 455, and Avitus, a Frank, was then made emperor, by Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths. He reigned but about ten months, and was succeeded, after an interregnum, by Majorianus; who, after an unfortunate expedition against the Vandals, was deposed by his general, Ricimer. Severus was the next emperor of the west; and after he had reigned five years, another interregnum took place. Anthemius was subsequently proclaimed emperor by the army of Ricimer; and about four years and a-half afterwards, that powerful officer placed Olybricus on the throne. He held it only seven months, when he was killed by the Goths; and after an interval of four months, the precarious sceptre was consigned to Glycerius. This potentate was deposed by Julius Nepos, who became his successor; but he was deprived of his power, and at length assassinated, by Orestes, an imperial officer, who placed on the throne his own son, [45]known in history as Augustulus, the last emperor of the west.

Anthemius proclaimed emperor.

A.D. 476. End of the empire of the west.

[46]About this time, a rebellion broke out among the barbarian troops employed in the imperial armies, who demanded a third part of the lands of Italy, as a reward

a Procopius.—Gibbon.

for their services; and on the refusal of this demand, they placed at their head a chief named Odoacer, who deposed the young emperor, and ascended the throne, assuming the title of king of Italy, in 476. The ancient history of Rome terminates with this event,[47] which is the beginning of the history of modern Italy.

End of the eastern empire.

The eastern division of the empire gradually lost its Roman character, and was diminished by the conquests of the Arabs and Turks, until nothing remained but the provinces that now constitute Greece and Turkey. Still it continued to exist, under the name of the Greek empire, till the middle of the fifteenth century; its rulers retaining the empty title of Roman emperors, presuming that it gave them a superiority over all other sovereigns.

The Romans extinct as a nation.

The Romans at length became extinct as a nation, or rather confounded with their barbarian conquerors, both in Italy and the provinces; while the Greek empire, after many vicissitudes, was overthrown by the Turks, who captured the city of Constantinople in 1453, and established the Ottoman empire in Europe.

QUESTIONS.

Questions on the chapter.

1 To whom did Constantine bequeath his empire?
2 What was the consequence of this division?
3 Who eventually gained the throne?
4 What was the character of Constantius?
5 How did he divide the sovereign power?
6 Where did Julian hold his court?
7 How did he distinguish himself?
8 Why did he declare war against the emperor?
9 How was the war prevented?
10 What is chiefly remarkable of the reign of Julian?
11 How was his death occasioned?
12 Under what circumstances was his successor chosen?
13 How was the army saved from destruction?
14 What became of Jovian?

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

B.C. Before Christ.

A.D. The Year of our Lord.

B. C.	
753	The city of Rome was founded.
752	Romulus became king of Rome.
750	War broke out between the Romans and Sabines.
747	The two nations united.
716	End of the reign of Romulus.
715	Numa Pompilius chosen king.
709	Priests and religious rites appointed.
673	Death of Numa, and succession of Tullus Hostilius.
667	The city of Alba destroyed, and the Albans removed to Rome.
642	Death of Tullus Hostilius, and succession of Ancus Marcius.
——	Foundation of Ostia, the seaport of Rome.
617	Ancus Marcius died; and Tarquin the elder became king.
——	Great public buildings in the reign of Tarquin
579	Death of Tarquin, and succession of Servius Tullius.
——	Roman people divided into tribes, and national assemblies appointed by Servius.
535	Servius murdered by Tarquin the Proud, who became king.
B. C.	
510	Tarquin dethroned, and driven into banishment.
——	Kingly government abolished, and the Republic established.
509	Two Consuls chosen annually, to govern instead of kings.
——	The first treaty, or alliance, between the Romans and Carthaginians.
507	Rome besieged and taken by Porsenna, king of Etruria.
501	War with the Latins.
499	Battle of Lake Regillus.
——	Dictator, or supreme magistrate, appointed.
495	Revolt of the Plebeians against the Patricians.
493	The dispute settled, and Tribunes of the people first appointed.
486	Agrarian law, for the division of conquered land among the people, first proposed.
485	Spurius Cassius, who proposed the law, charged with treason and executed.
483	War with Veii, a city of Etruria, commenced.
477	The Fabii, a great Patrician family, nearly all destroyed by the people of Veii.

B.C.

465 War broke out with the Aequians and Volscians.

463 Famine and plague at Rome.

461 Quarrels between the Plebians and Patricians.

458 Cincinnatus made Dictator.

454 Ambassadors sent to Greece, to obtain copies of the laws of Athens.

451 The laws of the "ten tables" instituted, and the "Decemvirs," or ten magistrates, appointed.

450 Laws added, making in all "twelve tables."

—— Second appointment of Decemvirs.

443 Death of Virginia.

—— The Decemvirs abolished, and the Consular government restored.

444 Five Military Tribunes chosen instead of Consuls.

443 The new office of Censor instituted.

440 Famine at Rome.

439 Cincinnatus Dictator. Spurius Mælius put to death.

438 Wars with the Veians, Volscians, and other states, during several years.

405 The siege of Veii commenced.

396 The city taken, by M. Furius Camillus, Dictator.

391 Camillus exiled from Rome.

390 The Gauls, having invaded Italy, defeated the Romans in the battle of Allia.

—— Rome taken and plundered by the Gauls, but rebuilt.

385 Death of Marcus Manlius.

376 No magistrates, except Tribunes of the people, elected for five years.

366 A Plebeian first appointed one of the Consuls.

365 Death of Camillus.

—— Plague at Rome.

362 Story of Marcus Curtius.

360 War with the Gauls.

343 First war with the Samnites.

340 War with the Latins.

—— The Consul Manlius, said to have put his own son to death, for disobedience to his command.

—— The self-sacrifice of the Consul Decius.

326 Second Samnite war began.

321 Surrender of a Roman army, at the defile of Caudium.

319 War renewed, and the Samnites defeated by the Dictator Papirius Cursor.

312 Great road from Rome to Capua, called the "Appian Way," constructed.

298 Third Samnite war commenced.

295 The self-devotion of the Consul Decius Mus.

281 War with the Tarentines, and with Pyrrhus, king of Epirus.

269 Silver coin first used at Rome.

268 Beginning of the last war with the Samnites.

266 All Italy submitted to the Romans.

263 The first Punic war began.

260 The first naval engagement in which the Carthaginians were beaten by the Romans.

258 War with the Carthaginians in Sicily, for several years.

B.C.

255 Regulus, the Roman general, taken prisoner by the Carthaginians.

238 Sardinia and Corsica taken by the Romans.

218 The second Punic war commenced.

—— Hannibal led an army across the Alps, and invaded Italy.

216 Defeat of the Romans at the battle of Cannæ.

214 Famous siege of Syracuse.

212 Capture of the city; and death of Archimedes.

206 Expedition of Scipio to Africa.

202 Hannibal recalled from Italy. Battle of Zama.

200 War with Philip, king of Macedon.

183 Death of Hannibal.

—— Death of Scipio Africanus.

171 War between the Romans and Perseus, king of Macedon.

149 The third Punic war began.

146 Carthage taken and destroyed by the Romans.

—— The city of Corinth taken and burnt by the Romans.

143 War in Spain, with the Numantines.

133 Numantia destroyed.

—— Insurrection of slaves in Sicily suppressed.

133 Tiberius Gracchus, a popular reformer, murdered.

121 Caius Gracchus also assassinated.

—— Part of Gaul made a Roman province.

111 War with Jugurtha, king of Numidia.

B.C.

106 Jugurtha taken prisoner.

101 Caius Marius, in his 5th Consulship, defeated the Cimbri.

90 The social war began.

87 Civil war broke out in Italy between the partizans of Marius and Sulla.

86 Marius chosen Consul for the 7th time. His death.

—— Sulla carried on a war with Greece, and took Athens.

82 Having returned to Italy, he renewed the civil war, entered Rome, and caused a multitude of persons to be put to death.

79 After holding the office of perpetual Dictator about three years, he resigned it.

—— Sertorius established an independent government in Spain.

78 Death of Sulla.

73 Insurrection of Gladiators, &c. in Italy, under Spartacus.

72 Sertorius assassinated in Spain.

—— War with Mithridates, king of Pontus.

67 Pompey destroyed the pirates who infested the Mediterranean sea.

66 He vanquished Mithridates.

63 Death of Mithridates.

—— Pompey besieged and took Jerusalem.

—— Catiline's conspiracy.

62 Catiline raised a civil war, and was killed in battle.

60 The first Triumvirate, or confederacy between Julius Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus.

B.C.	
58	Cæsar's wars in Gaul, &c.
55	His first invasion of Britain.
54	Second invasion.
49	The civil war commenced between Cæsar and Pompey.
48	Defeat of Pompey in the battle of Pharsalia.
——	Pompey assassinated.
45	Cæsar's return to Rome, where he attained the supreme power.
44	Conspiracy against Cæsar, and his assassination.
43	The second Triumvirate, or confederation between Octavius Cæsar, Marc Antony, and Lepidus.
42	The battle of Phillippi.
31	Civil war between Octavius Cæsar and Mark Antony. Battle of Actium.
30	Death of Mark Antony, and of Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt.
27	Octavius Cæsar received the titles of Augustus and Emperor of Rome.
22	Termination of the Republic.
12	Wars of the Romans in Germany.
5	New *census*, or return made of the population of the Roman empire.

A.D.	
	Birth of Jesus Christ. Beginning of the Christian Æra.
14	Death of Augustus, and accession of Tiberius.
37	Death of Tiberius.
——	Caligula made emperor.
42	Caligula assassinated, and succeeded by Claudius.
44	Britain invaded by the Romans.
——	Claudius in Britain.
54	Claudius poisoned. Nero made emperor.
64	Burning of the city of Rome.
68	Suicide of Nero.
——	Galba chosen emperor.
69	Otho and Vitellius successively emperors.
——	Vitellius put to death, Dec. 20.
——	Vespasian emperor.
70	Jerusalem taken and destroyed by Titus.
——	The Coliseum built at Rome.
79	Death of Vespasian, and succession of Titus.
——	Eruption of Mount Vesuvius, and destruction of Pompeii.
81	Death of Titus.
——	Domitian emperor.
84	Invasion of Caledonia, by Agricola, Roman Governor of Britain.
96	Assassination of Domitian.
——	Accession of Nerva.
98	Death of Nerva, Jan. 27; and succession of Trajan.
104	Conquest of Dacia.
114	Triumphal column erected at Rome.
117	Death of Trajan; and succession of Hadrian.
138	Antoninus Pius made emperor.
161	Marcus Aurelius emperor.
180	Death of Marcus Aurelius; and succession of Commodus.

A.D.	
192	Commodus assassinated.
193	Pertinax and Didius Julianus successively emperors.
193	Civil war (231,) Severus made emperor.
211	Death of Severus.
——	Caracalla and Geta emperors.
217	Caracalla assassinated.
——	Macrinus emperor.
222	Elagabulus emperor. His assassination.
——	Alexander Severus made emperor.
235	Alexander murdered by Maximin, who succeeded him.
238	Gordian emperor.
244	Philip emperor.
247	Secular Games celebrated.
249	Death of Philip, and succession of Decius.
253	Valerian emperor.
260	Gallienus emperor.
——	Thirty tyrants, or usurpers, in various parts of the Roman empire.
267	Gallienus assassinated.
270	Aurelian emperor.
276	Probus emperor.
282	Dioclesian made emperor with Maximian.
282	Revolt of Carausius in Britain.
305	Abdication of the two emperors.
——	Constantius I. and Galerius, emperors.
306	Accession of Constantine the Great.
——	Civil wars.
323	Constantine became sole emperor.
331	Constantinople rebuilt, and made the capital of the empire.
——	Christianity appointed the established religion.
337	Death of Constantine, and accession of Constantius II.
361	Julian emperor.
——	Christianity abolished.
364	Jovian emperor.
——	Christianity restored.
364	Valentinian and Valens, emperors.
379	Theodosius the Great acknowledged emperor.
395	Death of Theodosius.
——	Roman world divided into the eastern and western empires.
476	End of the empire of the west.
1453	End of the eastern empire.

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